Darkness falls

Characters:
Anubis - god of funerary rites
Anqounet - Goddess of death
Lana - Goddess of life *
Abyria - goddess of darkness, death and the dark spirit
Varnok -
Daveit - god of hatred
Talon - god of light
The voice (God) (Dave)
The Goddess (the voice wife) (Lilith)
Anjalin - pyro and blood sorceress *
Koji (Anjalin's brother)
Dareence - a thief that can teleport and turn invisible but has a gun that he stole from the dark mage (can kill gods)
Dina - Dareence Mother *
Shen - Dareence Father
Serenity - Dareence's sister and President of U.S
Stan - the collector
Savior - robot god killer
Order 9906 prime - controls over the tech civilization.
Sealvena Diamond - Queen of the heavens *
Scarlet Diamond - The queen of magic
Selena Diamond - Goddess of war *
Sel Diamond - Goddess of knowledge and intelligence (married to Anqounet) *
Death/Necro - (married to Lana but not in season 3)
Zoi - necromancy (Necro's sister)
Jaley - earth elf that has the power of unluckiness (witch of luck and human in season 3) *
Edenber - Oger (can stop time with a watch but not accurate) (time witch and human in season 3)
Gnomeblely - Gnome (can make anything he finds into a weapon. He is very small.)
The tree of life
Massy
Nick
Melanie - darkness *
Louis - witch that takes powers.
Grim Reaper - (death's wife)(season 3)
Death prime - (Grim's husband) (the prime death but the other deaths are his sons.)(season 3)
Zoze (season 3)

Season 1

Episode 1 The Rise of the People

THE VOICE: A wave of light, cleansing, absolute, passing through the very fabric of existence. It scours the cosmos of shadow, of doubt, of… me. But every story has a beginning, long before its end. A single thread, pulled from a tapestry, that leads to the unravelling of everything. Hello, everyone. I am…well, I am God. But for the purposes of this little viewing, you can call me The Voice. Most do. Now, come. Let us rewind the celestial clock. Let us see how the light learned to fear the dark.

(The camera, as if guided by a divine hand, soars through nebulae, past spinning galaxies, diving through the vibrant atmosphere of a world where magic and technology are not at odds, but intertwined. We zoom into the heart of the Kingdom of Magic, a city of shimmering spires and humming ley-lines.)

SCENE 1: THE HEIST

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

The mansion of the DARK MAGE is a silhouette of sharp angles and cold, polished stone against the violet twilight. Inside, it is a museum of arcane and political power.

SHEN, a man with the weathered hands of a brawler and the keen eyes of a strategist, is crouched on a rooftop across the street. His son, DARRENCE, younger, with a nervous energy he tries to mask with bravado, checks the charge on his custom-made energy gauntlet.

SHEN
(Whispering into a com)
Son, are you ready? Once your mother gives the go-ahead, we enter. No mistakes.

Through the window, we see DINA, the Dark Mage's head of household, a woman of graceful efficiency. She helps the DARK MAGE, a man with an imposing presence and eyes that hold centuries of secrets, into his coat.

DARK MAGE
The Conclave meeting will run late, Dina. Ensure Cindi is in bed by eight. Not a minute less. The dreams…they are particularly vivid tonight.

DINA

Of course, sir. I'll read to her until she's fast asleep. Safe travels.

The Dark Mage gives a curt nod and enters a sleek, silent hover-car. Dina watches from the doorway, her face a mask of placid loyalty until the vehicle disappears around a bend. The moment it's gone, the mask drops. She closes the door, and with a practiced tap of her ring, a holographic tablet flickers to life. Her fingers fly across the interface, bypassing layers of magical and technological security.

DINA (V.O.)
Security is offline. The house is yours. You have six hours.

On the rooftop, Shen smiles.

SHEN
Your mother just gave the signal. Let's go.

They mount their motorcycles…not magical, but sleek, powerful machines that roar to life with a satisfyingly mundane growl. They speed off into the night.

INT. CINDI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is a child's sanctuary, filled with plush toys and, curiously, detailed sketches of mythical beasts. CINDI, a girl of about eight with wide, intelligent eyes, hands Dina a heavy, leather-bound book.

CINDI
"The Dark Lord's Children"? Again? You said it was scary.

DINA
(Smiling softly)
All the best stories are, my dear. But it's not about the fear. It's about the family. How they protect each other.

Dina reads, her voice a soothing melody. She speaks of a forgotten king, his children scattered, and a legacy of power that could challenge the heavens themselves. As Cindi's eyelids grow heavy, Dina's performance is flawless, a perfect portrait of care. She tucks the girl in, kisses her forehead, and slips from the room like a ghost.

INT. MANSION FOYER - NIGHT

Dina opens the front door. Shen and Darrence slip inside.

SHEN
(Embracing Dina)

The objective? One last time, then we fade away.

DINA
There's a relic in his vault. Our client was… very specific. Powerful enough to buy us a new life, far from kingdoms and mages.

DARRENCE
Where is the vault, Mother?

DINA
I don't know. He's never shown me. But the house is blind and deaf to us now. Split up. Find it.

They separate. Darrence takes the upper west wing. He passes Cindi's door, then a long gallery wall papered not with art, but with a child's drawings. Dozens of them. A man with a kind smile, holding a little girl's hand. The same man teaching her to levitate a spoon. At the bottom of each, a careful signature: Cindi. Darrence pauses, his finger tracing the crayon lines.

DARRENCE
(Into com)
Nothing here. Just… pictures.

Shen explores the east wing, a hall of vanity. Replicas of legendary relics…the Sword of Aethel, the Crown of Sorrows…sit in glass cases. Portraits show the Dark Mage with world leaders, but one catches Shen's eye: a faded photograph of three young people laughing, their hands alight with magic…a young Dark Mage, a radiant young woman who would become the Goddess, and a mischievous young man who would become the God. The Voice.

SHEN
(Into com)
I've got nothing but dusty trophies and old friends. Dina?

Dina moves through the family's private quarters. She passes the Dark Mage's study, the door slightly ajar, revealing walls lined with ancient texts. Then, she sees it. Mounted on the wall between his room and Cindi's is a weapon. It is not ornate. It is brutal, functional, made of a black, non-reflective metal. An inscription glows with a faint, purple light: "Blessed by the Dark Lord. The God-Killer."

Before she can process this, the hallway ahead of her shimmers. The wall at the end dissolves, replaced by a massive, circular vault door, covered in shifting, shadowy runes. It begins to hum, a low, resonant frequency that seems to vibrate in her very bones. A whisper, no louder than a thought, slithers into her mind. Dina…

DINA
(Into com, voice tight)

Everyone, to me. The west private hallway. I've found it. And it… found me.

Shen and Darrence arrive, their awe mirrored as they stare at the living vault.

DARRENCE
Mother, do you know how to open that?

Dina doesn't answer. She approaches, her technician's instincts taking over. Wires snake from her bracelet, seeking ports in the vault's surface.

SHEN
(Noticing the weapon)
What in the realms is that? What kind of parent leaves a… a thing like that just sitting in the hallway?

DINA
(Without looking up)
Says the man who taught his son to pick locks before he could read.

SHEN
That's different! That's a life skill!

Darrence, however, isn't listening. He's staring back down the hallway. A pool of absolute blackness is spreading across the floor, consuming the light.

DARRENCE
Why is there just… a shadow? A shadow with no source?

Shen turns. "What…?"

At that moment, the vault door hisses and grinds open. But from within, no treasure is revealed…only a deeper darkness. And from that darkness, the Dark Mage steps out, his eyes burning with cold fury.

DARK MAGE
You dare.

He flicks a wrist. A concussive wave of pure force slams into Dina, sending her crashing into Shen. They tumble over a plush couch. Darrence, acting on instinct, smashes the glass case and grabs the God-Killer. He rushes to his parents' side.

DARRENCE
Are you okay?

They scramble to their feet. Shen draws a pair of enchanted daggers that crackle with energy. Dina's bracelets reconfigure, forming electrified knuckles with spear-points extending over her fists. Darrence hefts the heavy gun, his hands shaking.

The Dark Mage hovers towards them, the shadows in the room stretching towards him like loyal hounds.

DARK MAGE
You were my most trusted, Dina. Now, you will be my example.

He becomes a blur. Darrence fires, but the mage dissolves into smoke, the bullets passing through him harmlessly. He re-materializes behind Shen, delivering a kick that sends him sprawling. He telekinetically hurls Dina over a coffee table, the furniture splintering. Darrence fires again and again, but the mage is a phantom, untouchable. With a final, contemptuous gesture, the mage slams Darrence against a stone countertop. His head connects with a sickening crack, and he slumps to the floor, unconscious.

The Dark Mage glides to Shen, who is struggling to rise. He lifts him by the throat.

SHEN
(Gasping)
We just… wanted out…

DARK MAGE
There is no "out."

Shen drives a dagger into the mage's shoulder. The mage doesn't even flinch.

DARK MAGE
You hit hard. I hit harder.

He thrusts his open palm into Shen's chest. There is a sound of shattering bone and sizzling flesh. A crater is blown clean through his torso. Shen's body goes limp and drops to the floor.

The Dark Mage turns to Dina.

DARK MAGE
A pity.

He grabs her throat. She struggles, her electrified fists sparking against an invisible shield.

DARRENCE
(Moaning, regaining consciousness)
No… stop…

As the Dark Mage squeezes, Darrence, vision blurry, raises the God-Killer. He doesn't aim. He simply pulls the trigger.

The gun doesn't roar. It sighs. A projectile of pure nothingness, a fragment of void, shoots out. It strikes the Dark Mage in the side.

He freezes. His grip on Dina loosens. He looks down at the wound, not of blood, but of dissipating matter.

DARK MAGE
(His voice filled with a strange, almost pitying horror)
You foolish child… you have no idea what you've just done.

He turns to dust, his form collapsing into a pile of grey ash on the expensive rug. The oppressive magic in the room vanishes.

Across the hall, a door creaks open. Cindi stands there, rubbing sleep from her eyes. She sees the ash that was her father, the bodies, and Darrence holding the smoking weapon. Her face contorts in terror. She slams the door shut.

Darrence stumbles forward, scooping some of the ash into an empty cartridge case from his pocket. He looks at his parents, at the ruin of his life, and a sob wracks his body. The sound of approaching sirens…magical and mundane…echoes from outside. Mages of the Conclave, alerted by the death of one of their own, are arriving.

Darrence fires the God-Killer blindly down the hallway, shattering the front entrance, and flees into the night.

(The camera pulls back, through the roof, into the sky.)

THE VOICE (V.O.)
And so, life unravels in a single, violent night. To lose everything, to have your world unmade before your eyes…it is a unique form of torment. But tragedy is a thread that connects us all. Let us follow another. A sorceress, burdened with a gift, and a brother she would move heaven and earth to protect.

SCENE 2: A FAMILY OF TWO

EXT. TRAINING FIELD - DAY

An open field under a bright, two-sunned sky. ANJALIN, a young woman with intense eyes and hair the color of dark wine, stands opposite KOJI, a boy of ten, all knees and elbows and boundless enthusiasm.

ANJALIN
Focus, Koji. Look at me. Don't try to force it. Just feel the energy around you. The heat in the air, the life in the soil.

She opens her palm. A perfect sphere of fire ignites above it. Then, something else…a thick, crimson liquid seeps from her skin, swirling around the flames, a beautiful and grotesque ballet of blood and fire.

KOJI
I can't! You're just better at it than me!

ANJALIN
Doubt is a lock on your potential. Now, watch.

She hurls the hybrid orb at a training dummy. It doesn't just burn; it consumes. The dummy is encased in a cocoon of burning blood, which then hardens like ceramic before shattering.

ANJALIN
Now, your sword. Let's work with what comes naturally.

Koji grins, running to his backpack and pulling out a well-worn, but expertly maintained, wooden sword. They spar in the center of the field. He is agile, creative, but predictable. Anjalin parries his every move with an almost lazy grace.

ANJALIN
You're wasting your energy on big swings. Observe. Wait for the opening.

He feints, watches her defensive stance, and dives for her legs. But she's already anticipated it, her leg sweeping up in a roundhouse kick that sends his sword spinning from his hands.

ANJALIN
And be prepared for the unpredictable. The world won't fight fair.

KOJI
Why are you being so hard on me?

ANJALIN
(Brusque, but her eyes are soft)
Because no one else will be. Not the monsters in the dark, not the guards at the city gates, not the gods on their thrones. Now, again.

This time, Koji learns. He switches his sword to his left hand mid-swing, catching her off guard. The tip of his wooden blade taps her ribs.

ANJALIN
(Laughing, a genuine, warm sound)
Yes! You got me! Well done, Koji. That's enough for today. Let's go to Dave's Diner.

KOJI
Really? The one with the blue milkshakes?

ANJALIN
You've earned it.

They walk hand-in-hand towards the bustling city, a picture of sibling devotion.

INT. DAVE'S DINER - NIGHT

The diner is a bubble of warm light and greasy comfort, a melting pot of species. A friendly WAITRESS seats them in a booth. Koji presses his face against the window, watching the fantastical traffic.

KOJI
Can we come back here on my 11th birthday?

ANJALIN
We can come back every week if you want.

KOJI
(His smile fading)
Do you miss Mother?

Anjalin's face tightens. She stares at her menu.

ANJALIN
Yes. But she's gone. Father and his…new family are gone. It's just us. And that's enough. Look, milkshakes.

The Waitress delivers two towering, azure-blue milkshakes. The moment of sadness passes. They order their food and are halfway through their heaping platters of bacon and eggs when Koji points outside.

KOJI
Look! That man is getting chased!

Anjalin glances out. DARRENCE, disheveled and desperate, is sprinting down the street, dodging energy blasts from a squad of Conclave Mages.

ANJALIN
Don’t stare. Just eat. We’re safe in here.

Darrence, seeing the diner as a refuge, bursts through the doors.

WAITRESS
Hey! You can’t be in here!

He ignores her, diving behind the counter. The Mages enter, their dark robes a stark contrast to the diner’s cheerful decor.

LEAD MAGE
Where is the thief? The murderer!

The terrified waitress just points a shaking finger.

KOJI
(Whispering)
You have to help him.

ANJALIN
My only job is to protect you. Stay under the table. Do not move.

She stands, drawing the attention of the Mages.

ANJALIN
He’s just one man. Is this really necessary?

A Mage responds with a bolt of shadow. Anjalin smacks it aside with a whip of fire. The diner erupts into chaos. Patrons scream and duck. Anjalin and Darrence, an unlikely duo, fight back-to-back against the Mages. Fire and blood against shadow and force.

Under the table, Koji watches, terrified. He sees his sister, magnificent and fierce, holding her own. He sees Darrence, a desperate animal fighting for his life. He can’t just hide. He crawls out, clutching his wooden sword, wanting to help.

At that exact moment, Darrence, pressed hard, fires the God-Killer. The projectile, that same sigh of nothingness, misses its target, ricochets off a stainless-steel coffee machine, and disintegrates a salt shaker. A tiny, almost invisible fragment of the void, a speck of dust from the blast, touches Koji’s arm.

He freezes. A grey spot appears on his skin. It spreads fast.

KOJI
Anjalin…? I don’t feel so good…

She turns. Her world slows to a crawl. She sees the greyness crawling up her brother’s neck. She sees the confusion and fear in his eyes.

KOJI
(Crying)
Sister…!

He reaches for her, and his hand turns to ash. Then his arm, his body, his face. In less than a second, Koji is gone. A small pile of dust settles on the checkerboard floor.

Anjalin’s scream is not a sound. It is a physical event. A shockwave of pure, unadulterated grief erupts from her. The fire and blood that are her power explode outwards in a cataclysmic spiral. The diner, the Mages, the Waitress, the patrons…everything is vaporized in an instant. The very ground is scorched into glass.

When the silence returns, there is only a crater where the diner once stood. In the center, Anjalin is on her knees, sobbing, the air around her still shimmering with heat and the faint, coppery smell of blood.

Darrence, who managed to duck behind the diner’s magically-reinforced fridge, staggers out. He sees the destruction. He sees the woman, broken.

DARRENCE
I… I am so sorry. I didn’t mean to…

Anjalin lifts her head. Her eyes are no longer human. They are pools of boiling blood, with pinpricks of white-hot fire at their centers. She looks at him, and he sees a hatred so profound it feels like a physical weight.

ANJALIN
(Her voice a raw, multi-layered whisper)
This… is all… YOUR FAULT!

Darrence doesn’t wait. He turns and runs, the weight of another life destroyed heavy on his soul.

(The camera ascends once more, the cheerful kingdom now marred by a fresh, smoking scar.)

THE VOICE (V.O.)
There is no pain quite like that of a protector who has failed to protect. She is adrift now, a weapon without a sheath. And in this universe, loose weapons are always found. But our view

must widen. For while individuals suffer, kingdoms plot. Let us turn our gaze to the desolate places, where the seeds of war are sown.

SCENE 3: THE DIAMOND SISTERS' GAMBIT

EXT. DIAMOND KINGDOM - DAY

The Wastelands are a misnomer here. This region, protected by the power of the four DIAMOND SISTERS, is an oasis. Lush, bio-luminescent flora thrives under a customized atmospheric dome. A crowd of mixed species…cyborgs, beast-kin, elementals…cheers as QUEEN SEALVENA, the eldest sister, regal and iron-willed, steps onto her palace terrace.

SEALVENA
My people! For generations, we have been pushed to the barren edges of this world by the so-called 'divine'. They hoard the fertile lands, the flowing rivers, while we scrape and struggle! No more!

The crowd roars its approval.

SEALVENA
I give you our answer to their tyranny! Our shield and our spear! The God-Killer robot: SAVIOR!

A platform rises, revealing SAVIOR. It is not a clanking metal man, but a sleek, humanoid figure of polished white alloy and glowing blue energy lines. It moves with a silent, predatory grace.

SEALVENA
With Savior, we will take back what is ours! We will free our neighbors! We will show the gods that their time is over!

The cheers are deafening. Sealvena and Savior step back inside.

INT. WAR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The other three sisters are waiting. SEL, the strategist, pores over holographic maps. SELENA, the warrior, sharpens a massive axe. SCARLET, the diplomat, sips a glass of wine, her expression unreadable.

SELENA
(Slamming her fist on the table)
We have the army! We have the weapon! Let’s march! Let’s burn their golden cities!

SEL
Patience, sister. Savior is a scalpel, not a cudgel. He can challenge a god, perhaps two. But he cannot fight the entire Pantheon. We need more.

SCARLET
What do you propose?

SEL
We must finally go see Stan. The Hermit King. He was there, at the beginning. He knows their weaknesses.

SEALVENA
Stan… he hasn't involved himself in the affairs of the world since the Great Schism.

SEL
He will for this. He has something. An artifact, a knowledge… something that can kill the High Divinities, the ones even Savior cannot touch.

Sealvena considers this, then nods.

SEALVENA
Then we go to Stan's kingdom.

Their journey is a spectacle of power. Selena in her roaring, spike-wheeled monster truck. Scarlet on a silent, hovering motorcycle. Sel and Sealvena flying alongside them, their innate magic creating shimmering trails in the air.

They arrive at a kingdom that is not a city, but a single, massive, geometric structure jutting from the desert. The gates open without a sound.

On a high balcony, STAN watches them arrive. He is a tall, humanoid robot, his body polished to a mirror shine, reflecting the stark desert sun. His face is a smooth, expressive metal plate, currently set in a neutral, observing expression. He leans on a scythe that also serves as a cane, its blade seeming to absorb the light around it.

STAN
(His voice a calibrated, resonant baritone)
They are here. Right on schedule.

INT. STAN'S STRONGHOLD - DAY

Stan meets them at the doors. His movements are fluid, silent, and impossibly precise.

STAN
Sealvena. Selena. Scarlet. Sel. I calculated you would arrive today. I know why you are here. Follow me.

He leads them down an impossibly long hallway. The walls are lined with portraits depicting a history long forgotten. One shows a younger, less-polished model of Stan fighting alongside a figure wreathed in shadow…the Dark Lord. Another shows them with a benevolent King and Queen of the Gods, and a legion of sleek robots from the Tech Kingdom.

SEL
You… your model… fought with the Dark Lord? Alongside the Gods?

STAN
(Emitting a soft, whirring chuckle)
Oh, yes. We were all allies once. A unified front. Before the Betrayal. Before the light decided it was the only light that should shine. Now, come.

The hallway ends at a vast, circular vault. Stan raises his free hand, and a complex sequence of holographic runes flashes from his palm. Layer upon layer of doors slide open, revealing a library of impossible scale. In the center grows a single, massive, silver-barked tree. And guarding it are creatures of living shadow and sharp angles…KILBERS.

SEL
What are they?

STAN
The Kilbers. Proctors left behind by the Dark Lord. They guard the truth.

They approach the tree. The KING KILBER, larger than the rest, detaches from the shadows and, with a bow, offers Stan a book from a hollow in the trunk. The book is bound in what looks like black dragonhide, with a single, blood-red gem set into the cover.

STAN
This is what you need. "The Lexicon of the Void." It speaks of things that existed before light, and will exist after.

SEALVENA
(Taking the book)
Thank you, Stan.

STAN
The world is a scale, Queen Sealvena. You are placing a very heavy weight on one side. I can only hope your organic minds are prepared for the tilt.

They leave, the massive doors sealing shut behind them. Once they are gone, Stan walks back to the silver tree. The King Kilber approaches.

KING KILBER

(His voice like grinding stones)
It begins.

STAN
(The red gem on the book's cover reflects in his polished face, giving the illusion of a glowing eye)
Affirmative. After all this time of waiting in the light…it is finally time for the Dark to have its turn.

(The camera pulls back, through Stan's fortress, high into the atmosphere, until the planet is a marble.)

THE VOICE (V.O.)
And so the pieces are set upon the board. The thief, running from his past. The sorceress, burning with a need for vengeance. The queens, hungry for a war they cannot possibly comprehend. All believing they are the masters of their own fate. How amusing.

(The screen cuts to black. A silence deeper than space itself.)

THE DARK Lord (V.O.)
(A low, resonant, and deeply amused laugh that seems to come from everywhere and nowhere at once)
Oh, little gods… little mortals… you are merely painting on a canvas I prepared long, long ago. I can’t wait to see you all soon.

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EPISODE 2: DUST

COLD OPEN

A wave of light, cleansing, absolute, passing through the very fabric of existence. It scours the cosmos of shadow, of doubt, of… me. But every story has a beginning, long before its end. A single thread, pulled from a tapestry, that leads to the unravelling of everything.

Hello, everyone. Again. It has been five weeks in your linear time. A blink for me, but for you… oh, for you, so much can happen. So many choices made. So many debts incurred. Let us leave the Kingdom of Magic, with its fresh scars and simmering rage, and turn our gaze to a land of logic and hard light. A kingdom built not on spells, but on science. A floating bastion of order.

We break through the sky, through the layers of atmospheric shielding, to the TECH KINGDOM.

(MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE - A rapid montage of previous events: The heist, the deaths, Anjalin's grief, the Diamond Sisters' meeting with Stan, all set to a haunting, epic theme.)

SCENE 1: THE FLOATING BASTION

EXT. TECH KINGDOM - DAY

The Tech Kingdom is not a landmass, but a colossal, geometric structure floating serenely above the clouds. Its surfaces are polished alloy and shimmering energy fields. Transport ships flit between docking spires like metallic dragonflies. At its very pinnacle stands the Central Command Tower, a needle of obsidian and blue light.

INT. CENTRAL COMMAND TOWER - PRIME'S OFFICE - DAY

9906 PRIME, the ruler of the Tech Kingdom, is not a man. He is a pinnacle of synthetic life. His form is humanoid, crafted of a matte grey alloy etched with fine, glowing blue circuit patterns. His face is capable of expression, but it is restrained, calculated. He stands before a massive holographic display, watching data streams from across his floating domain.

Two lesser 9906 MODELS, identical in basic design but lacking Prime’s presence, stand at attention.

9906 PRIME
Status of the Perimeter Shield Array? The kinetic deflection grids?

9906 MODEL ALPHA
Shield integrity at 99.8%, Prime. Fluctuations are within acceptable parameters. Grids are operational.

9906 MODEL BETA
The atmospheric processors are functioning at 112% efficiency. The lower agricultural sectors report a record yield.

Prime turns from the display, his optical sensors focusing on them with an intensity that makes even other robots subtly straighten their posture.

9906 PRIME
Efficiency is not security. Complacency is a virus. You two will personally run a Level-5 diagnostic on all external defence systems. From the magma-core stabilizers to the high-atmosphere pulse cannons. If they ever turn their eyes here, the people in the lower habitation rings and the upper spires will share the same fate: annihilation. There will be no shelter.

9906 MODEL ALPHA
Understood, Prime. And… the inquiry regarding the Dark Lord? Has there been a response?

A micro-expression…a flicker in the blue light of his optics…crosses Prime's face. It is the synthetic equivalent of profound unease.

9906 PRIME
That is not your operational concern. Your concern is the integrity of this kingdom. And the Pit. Remind the Guardian Corps: their watch over the Sealing Pit is absolute. Rotations are to be doubled. That is not just where we contain the Titans. It is where the fractures between realms are weakest. It is the lock on a door that must never, ever open.

BOTH MODELS
Yes, Prime.

They exit with silent, precise steps. Once alone, Prime walks onto his private terrace. The wind here is fierce, howling around the tower's peak. He looks not down at his kingdom, but up, into the vast, star-dusted void.

9906 PRIME
(To the empty air)
I know you're watching. Your surveillance is a constant, low-grade static in my sensors. Show yourself.

The clouds above part, not by wind, but by will. A face, vast enough to fill the horizon, serene and terrible in its beauty, looks down. It is THE VOICE.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
A necessary oversight, old machine. To ensure the garden grows as intended.

9906 PRIME
What in the designated heavens are you doing, Voice? You are too… big to be a mere spectator. You abdicate. You watch while your wife, the Goddess, prunes and “perfects” with a zealot’s fire. She is burning the garden to plant her own sterile flowers.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
She makes a better world. Order. Peace. An end to the endless, squabbling chaos.

9906 PRIME
(His voice crackles with static, a sign of deep emotional processing)
Chaos is life. Order is a quiet death. You know what she is truly doing. You feel the balance shifting. And when it breaks… when the Dark Lord steps back into the world he was betrayed from… your perfect order, your wife, you… will be dust in the cosmic wind.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
Goodbye, 9906. Tend to your floating cage.

The face dissolves, the clouds rushing back. Prime stands alone in the screaming wind.

9906 PRIME
(A low, synthetic hum that builds into a grim, echoing laugh)
We will meet again. Very soon. And you will not be smiling.

(The perspective shifts, as if The Voice has physically grabbed the camera and hurled it across the world.)

THE VOICE (V.O)
He dwells on doom. I prefer to look at the light. My light. Behold, my son’s domain.

SCENE 2: THE PRICE OF A CROWN

EXT. CITY OF LIGHT - DAY

An island city of breathtaking beauty. White marble and gold spires reach for the sun. Parks are eternally in bloom. It is a place of curated peace. At its heart is the LUMINOUS SPIRE.

INT. LUMINOUS SPIRE - THRONE ROOM - DAY

The room is all open air and light. TALON, the God of Light, son of The Voice and the Goddess, stands by a panoramic window. He is youthful, radiant, dressed in gleaming white and gold. But his eyes hold a weight at odds with his surroundings.

He is not alone. DARRENCE stands in the center of the room, cleaned up, wearing new clothes, but his posture is rigid, his eyes hollow. SEL leans against a pillar, a picture of casual, deadly grace.

TALON
Why are you with her, Darrence? After what she and her kind have done? The Diamond Sisters sow nothing but discord.

DARRENCE
(His voice is flat, rehearsed)
She helped me. Gave me purpose. More than you could have.

TALON
I helped you awaken the power inside you! I showed you that the ashes you carried weren't just grief, they were a key! A terrible, painful key, but a key nonetheless!

SEL
(Pushing off the pillar, her tone dripping with theatrical disdain)
Ah, yes. The grand awakening. Rubbing a murdered man's remains into your skin. How very… divine of you. It wasn't enlightenment, Talon. It was desecration. It was disgusting.

TALON
(Wheeling on her)
And you judge me? You, who grinds the bones of shadow-beasts for your reagents? Who uses the ashes of fallen stars in your forge? You trade in death just as much!

SEL
(A cold, sharp smile)
The key word, little god, is used. I use death for science. For magic. To create tools, weapons, shields… to protect my people from your family, who so casually decide who is worthy of this 'perfect' world. Now, that's enough philosophy for me.

She gives a subtle, almost imperceptible nod to Darrence.

DARRENCE
You can still run, Talon. Save yourself.

TALON
(Sets his jaw, light beginning to glimmer at his fingertips)
I am the God of Light. I do not run from a fight. Especially not in my own home.

SEL
(Settles gracefully onto the edge of a marble table)
He did warn you.

Darrence's body tenses. Then, his eyes…usually haunted brown…flash a brilliant, unnatural light blue. The warmth drains from his face.

DARRENCE/SEL (in unison)
He doesn't have a choice.

Darrence vanishes. Not just invisible…the air where he stood winks out of existence. Talon reacts instantly, throwing his hands out. Rays of pure, solid light erupt, criss-crossing the room like laser tripwires. One catches the shimmer of displaced air.

TALON
There!

He gestures, and the light-rays coalesce into a whip, yanking Darrence's form into visibility and hurling him across the room. Darrence smashes into a giant statue of a previous god, sending chunks of marble crashing to the floor.

SEL
(Without moving from her seat)
Get up. Now.

Talon takes to the air, a corona of light around him, and flies straight for Sel. But before he can reach her, Darrence teleports again…a sharp crack of displaced air…and materializes mid-air, driving a kick into Talon's side. The god grunts, spiraling to the ground.

Darrence lands, stalking towards him. But when he speaks, it is not his voice. It is Sel's, perfectly mimicked, coming from his mouth.

DARRENCE (SEL'S VOICE)
Poor, radiant Talon. Did you think this was a duel? That I would play by your rules of honour?

Talon scrambles back towards his ornate desk. Behind it, a swirling, golden portal of light hums…his personal conduit to the divine realms. As Darrence runs at him, Talon thrusts both hands into the portal.

TALON
Be cleansed!

A beam of concentrated solar plasma, hot enough to vaporize steel, screams from the portal. Darrence doesn't dodge. He teleports…not away, but sideways, reappearing right beside Talon. He drives a fist into the god's jaw. Talon's head snaps back, the devastating beam cutting off as he loses focus.

Darrence staggers, clutching his head. For a second, his own voice breaks through, strained and desperate.

DARRENCE
Please… just… leave!

But the blue light floods back into his eyes. Sel's control reasserts itself. This time, Darrence's hand goes to the holster at his hip. He draws the God-Killer. He points it at Talon, who is struggling to rise, one hand to his bleeding mouth.

DARRENCE (SEL'S VOICE)
Bye bye.

He pulls the trigger. Not once. Three times. The silent sighs of void strike Talon in the chest. He is flung backwards, through the panoramic window. The reinforced crystal shatters into a million glittering pieces.

Talon falls, a golden star extinguished. But he does not hit the streets below. Halfway down, his body dissolves. Not into blood, but into luminous, gold dust that scatters on the wind like glittering pollen.

INT. LUMINOUS SPIRE - MOMENTS LATER

Sel finally rises from the table and walks to the shattered edge. She looks down at the golden dust settling on rooftops far below.

SEL
Well. Good job. Your service here is complete.

She snaps her fingers. Darrence gasps, the blue light vanishing from his eyes. He stumbles, looking at the gun in his hand, then at the broken window, horror dawning fresh on his face.

SEL
You can leave now.

DARRENCE
(Voice thick with self-loathing)
Yes… your majesty.

He teleports away in a flicker of blue light, leaving Sel alone in the silent throne room. She turns, walking to Talon's desk. Her fingers dance over the smooth surface, searching. She finds nothing of obvious value. With a sigh, she sits in his chair.

Her elbow accidentally presses a hidden panel on the armrest.

The entire room SHIMMERS. The bright, sunlit marble fades, replaced by cold, dark stone. The open sky becomes a vaulted ceiling of black crystal. This is a shadowed, inverted version of the office. And in Talon's chair now sits THE DARK LORD.

He is clad in elegant, archaic black robes. He sips tea from a bone-china cup, his face hidden in shadow except for a slow, smiling mouth.

THE DARK LORD
So. The ambitious little queen. What deal are you hoping to broker with me, hm? Power? A kingdom? Revenge?

SEL
(She doesn't flinch. This is what she wanted.)
I know your plan. Not all of it, but enough. The fractures, the waiting, the return. I want a place in the new order. Not as a mortal queen. When I die…if I die…I want to be one of your Generals in Hell.

The Dark Lord's smile widens. He sets his cup down with a soft clink.

THE DARK LORD
A general? You wish to command legions of the damned? To be bound to my will for all eternity? That is not a request one makes lightly, child.

SEL
I do not do anything lightly.

THE DARK LORD
Then we have an accord. But understand: my generals are not servants. They are extensions of my being. You will be… owned.

He extends a hand across the desk. It is pale, almost grey. Sel reaches out and takes it.

As their hands clasp, something moves in the shadows of the Dark Lord's sleeve. A serpent, wrought of living darkness, slithers out and wraps tightly around their joined wrists. A searing cold, not of ice but of absolute negation, floods up Sel's arm. She watches, mesmerized and horrified, as the darkness crawls up her fingers, turning them an inky black before fading back to her normal skin tone, leaving behind only a faint, tracery of black veins that quickly vanish.

SEL
What…what was that?

THE DARK LORD
Insurance. And a gift. The Mark of the Heir. As long as your bloodline lives, you are connected. And should one of your diamond sisters fall… you will not only gain their power in life. You will claim their essence in death. A piece of them will forever bolster your own.

SEL
(A slow, hungry smile spreads on her lips)
Yes… sir.

THE DARK LORD
Go. Be the normal, scheming queen. Plausible deniability is a powerful weapon. I will call for you when the time is right.

The dark office, the Dark Lord, they all dissolve like smoke. Sel is back in the bright, sunlit, broken throne room. She looks at her hand, flexing her fingers. They look normal.

But a whisper, dry as tomb dust, echoes in her mind alone: "You have two forms now, my child. The light… and the true one."

SCENE 3: A TEA PARTY OF MONSTERS

EXT. ANJALIN'S TREEHOUSE - DAY

The dwelling is grown, not built, from a giant, ancient tree whose sap is crimson and whose leaves burn with a perpetual, low flame. It is beautiful and unsettling.

INT. ANJALIN'S TREEHOUSE - LIVING AREA

ANJALIN is pouring tea. The grief that once shattered her has been forged into a cold, sharp focus. SCAR, the flame-cat, is in his small, house-cat form, lounging on a blood-red rug.

Sel materializes in the hallway, not with a flash, but as if she'd always been there, stepping out of a deep shadow. She sings songs as she walks.

SEL
Anjalin, Anjalin, Anjaliiin…what spell have you cast todaaay? Something fiery? Something nasty?

She enters the living room. Anjalin doesn't look up from the tea.

ANJALIN

Hello, my good friend. Come. Sit. Tell me, is your new toy following its instructions?

Sel sinks into the plush couch. Scar immediately hops into her lap, his fiery mane cooling to a gentle warmth as she strokes him.

SEL
Oh, he's a marvel. Such an improvement over the last one. Far more… pliable.

ANJALIN
(Pouring Sel's tea)
What did you do with the previous model? The one with the unfortunate stutter?

SEL
(Waving a dismissive hand)
You know my sister, Selena. The Goddess of War needs her stress relief. She loves her punching bags. So… I recalibrated him. Gave him extra padding, a nice target painted on his chest. One hit from her divine fist and… poof. Recycled atoms.

They share a laugh. It's a chilling sound, devoid of warmth, full of shared cruelty.

SEL
(Leaning in, conspiratorial)
I made Darrence kill his best friend today. Talon. The little God of Light. The look on Darrence's face when he regained control… priceless.

Their laughter escalates, becoming howls of mirth. They slap each other's shoulders, tears of glee in their eyes.

ANJALIN
(Wiping a tear)
That's what he gets! He should suffer. He should drown in it!

SEL
(Calming, sipping her tea)
Don't you worry. My wife and I have many, many more lessons in pain planned for him. But now, darling, tell me. What have you been doing? Your power… it's singing a darker song lately.

ANJALIN
I have been… studying. The blood remembers things the mind forgets. The fire can purify, but it can also preserve memory. I'm learning to listen.

SEL

Fascinating. Your magic is unique. A fluke of lineage and tragedy. It could be so much more. I know someone. Ancient. Knowledgeable in things that predate the gods themselves. He might be able to help you… unlock your full potential.

ANJALIN
(Interest sharpening)
Who?

SEL
His name is 9906. The ancient machine-king of the Tech Kingdom. If anyone has records of primordial energies, of the source of life and blood and fire, it's him.

ANJALIN
Thank you, Sel. Truly.

SEL
Ah, but there's a condition. If you're to go on this delightful field trip… Darrence will be joining you.

Anjalin's face darkens.

ANJALIN
What? After what you just said? The torture you have planned?

SEL
Think, my dear. What is better torture than forcing him to be your protector? To spend every waking moment with the living reminder of his greatest sin? To have to rely on him, and him on you, in a dangerous world? It's a slow poison. Far more elegant than a quick blade.

Anjalin considers this, a slow, cruel smile mirroring Sel's.

ANJALIN
I see. And if something… unfortunate… were to befall him on the road? A bandit's arrow? A rogue Titan's claw?

SEL
(Sips her tea)
Then I couldn't possibly blame you. Accidents happen.

At that moment, Sel snaps the fingers of her free hand. There's a faint pop of air, and DARRENCE appears beside the couch, disoriented. He straightens immediately upon seeing Sel.

SEL

Darrence, dear. You remember Anjalin, don't you?

The memory hits him like a physical blow: the diner, the grey dust that was her brother, her eyes of blood and fire. Then, the overlay of Talon's golden dust. He pales.

DARRENCE
Yes, ma'am. I remember.

SEL
Good. Now you'll be helping her on a little journey. To the Tech Kingdom. You will be her sword, her shield, and her pack-mule. You will ensure nothing harms her.

DARRENCE
(His voice is hollow)
Yes, ma'am. I will make sure nothing bad happens to her.

SEL
I know you will.

ANJALIN
(Coldly)
I hope you know I have not forgiven you.

DARRENCE
That's… okay. I am sorry. For everything I caused you.

SEL
How wonderfully civil! Now you're talking. So, you two will be journey-mates. A team.

ANJALIN
Yes. Let's hope he can manage basic civility the whole way.

SEL
If he doesn't, he knows the consequences. Don't you, Darrence?

DARRENCE
(A flicker of fear in his eyes)
I will be on my utmost best behavior, your majesty. Thank you… for allowing me to come along, Anjalin.

ANJALIN
Don't thank me. This is all Sel's doing.

DARRENCE

Then… Thank you, my majesty.

SEL
You're welcome. Now, time is wasting. You need to start before the Bleeding Sun sets and the shadow-beasts get frisky. Anjalin, darling, do you have your things?

ANJALIN
Almost. Darrence, be a doll and fetch my travel pack from the pantry. The red one.

DARRENCE
Yes, ma'am.

He walks obediently down a different hallway. The moment he's out of earshot, Sel's playful demeanor vanishes. She turns to Anjalin, her voice low and serious.

SEL
Listen to me. You have to be on your best behavior too. The roads between here and the Floating Kingdom are not safe. Raiders, wild magic, remnants of old wars. He is a useful tool. A powerful, guilt-ridden tool. Make sure he doesn't get himself killed doing something stupidly noble.

ANJALIN
(Sighs)
I'll try.

SEL
Do more than try. Good puppets are so hard to find these days. The Conclave Mages keep executing them, and my wife… Well, she likes to test their durability in rather final ways.

ANJALIN
I know. You complain about it constantly. How the supply chain for disposable henchmen is in crisis.

Sel's grin returns. Anjalin smiles back.

ANJALIN
He's actually looking in the pantry. I don't even have a red pack.

They descend into another fit of silent, shoulder-shaking laughter.

Sel snaps her fingers again. Darrence reappears, looking confused.

SEL
My mistake. It's already outside. Come along. Adventure awaits.

SCENE 4: THE ROAD AHEAD

EXT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

Scar stretches, and with a roar of expanding flame, shifts into his full, majestic size…a great cat woven of living fire and muscular shadow. Anjalin swings onto his back with practiced ease. Darrence climbs up behind her, careful to keep a respectful distance.

Sel waves a hand, and two well-stuffed travel packs materialize, secured to Scar's flanks.

SEL
Stay on the old trader's road until you reach the Canyons of Echo. Then follow the river of crystal north. And for my sake… try not to kill each other.

Anjalin nods. Scar lets out a rumbling purr that sounds like a forge fire, and leaps forward, moving with impossible speed and silence along the forest path, leaving a trail of gently cooling embers in the grass.

Sel watches them disappear into the twilight. The last of her performative smile fades. She looks down at her own hands. In the deepening shadows, just for a second, she sees it: the tracery of black veins, the hint of the claw-like nails. She clenches her fists.

SEL
(To herself, a whisper filled with terrifying ambition)
One day, my love… one day I will sit beside you in your realm. Not as a guest. As a queen.

She turns and walks back into the treehouse, the door closing, leaving the forest in the quiet gloom of approaching night.

(FINAL SHOT: The camera pulls up, up, through the trees, past the moons now rising, until we see the tiny speck of Scar's flame moving along a thread-like road on the vast landscape below. We pull further back, into orbit, where the Tech Kingdom floats like a distant, silent jewel.)

THE VOICE (V.O.)
A journey begins. A puppet, a vessel of grief, and a secret queen, walking into the gears of a much larger machine. Will they find answers? Or will they simply become more dust on the wind? Tune in next time.

(The screen holds on the silent, starry view of the planet. Then, the faintest ripple of distortion passes over it, like heat haze, and from the silence, a familiar, dark laugh echoes, felt more than heard)

EPISODE 3: WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

(COLD OPEN)

THE VOICE (V.O.)
Oh! Welcome back. I wasn't expecting you to return to the theater of my musings so soon. Curiosity is a powerful thing, isn't it? A hunger that must be fed. Very well. Come with me.

(The perspective soars. The Voice 'parts' the clouds like a curtain, revealing the landscape far below, a patchwork of forests, rivers, and jagged mountain ranges.)

We rejoin our travelers. The puppet, the vessel of grief, and their fiery mount. They still have quite a journey ahead of them. The road to the Tech Kingdom is long, and roads… have a way of changing those who walk them. Let's eavesdrop, shall we? See what truths are spoken in the space between destinations.

We zoom in, the wind rushing past our 'ears' until we can hear the rhythmic padding of Scar's giant paws and the crackle of his mane.

(MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE)

SCENE 1: THE ROAD & THE REVELATION

EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

Scar moves with a ground-eating lope, serene and powerful. ANJALIN rides with easy grace. DARRENCE sits behind her, rigid, the space between them a gulf of shared trauma.

The silence has stretched for miles. Darrence finally breaks it.

DARRENCE
How…how did you and Sel meet? You're a sorceress. She's a Diamond Sister, a queen of an entire kingdom. Your worlds don't seem to… overlap.

ANJALIN
(Doesn't turn)
They do if you know where to look. She came to me years ago. Not as a queen, but as a scholar. Desperate. She wanted to know how it was possible. How one being could wield two primal forces…blood and fire…not as separate tools, but as one intertwined power.

DARRENCE

Why? Why would she need that?

ANJALIN
I told her it wasn't something to be learned. It was something you were born with. A… genetic fluke. My father was a Hemomancer, a master of blood. My mother was a Pyro-Magus, a weaver of living flame. I am the unstable, living product of their union.

DARRENCE
Where are they now? Your parents?

ANJALIN
(Her voice goes flat)
My father is dead. My mother… is gone. As for Sel… she said she wanted to understand how to protect her kingdom better. That if she could master more than one discipline, she could be a more complete shield for her sisters.

DARRENCE
(After a long pause)
Do you believe that? That's what she wanted? Because the woman who… who puppeteered me… she doesn't seem like someone who just wants to be a better shield.

ANJALIN
(A dry, humorless chuckle escapes her)
Sel has always been a two-sided coin. Charming and vicious, compassionate and ruthless, often in the same breath. I imagine she learned that from her wife.

Darrence nearly loses his balance.

DARRENCE
Wait. She's married? To whom?

ANJALIN
(Glances back, a faint, cruel smile touching her lips)
To the Goddess of Death. Anqounet. They've been bound for centuries. A union of knowledge and the inevitable end. Poetic, in a morbid way.

DARRENCE
The Goddess of Knowledge and the Goddess of Death… but they rule different lands! The Obsidian Spires and the Silent Plains… they're on opposite sides of the continent!

ANJALIN
And? Do you know all the political and romantic entanglements of the divine pantheon? Who shares a bed with whom? Which alliances are sealed with vows and which are fraying?

DARRENCE
There…there are more?

Anjalin lets out a genuine, surprised laugh. It's a sharp, bright sound that seems alien coming from her.

ANJALIN
Oh, you precious, naive thing. Of course there are. The divine family tree is less of a tree and more of a tangled, thorny bramble. But look…ahead. Do you see that?

She points. In the distance, nestled in a valley where the sunlight seems weaker, is a village. A crude, arching sign made of weathered wood and bleached bones spans the road.

DARRENCE
(Squinting)
It says… 'Morto.' What does that mean?

ANJALIN
'Morto' is an old tongue word. It means 'Dead.' Now, why would a village proudly name itself 'The Dead'?

DARRENCE
Well… it's getting dark. The sun's dipping fast. Scar must be tired. We should find an inn. Get a room.

ANJALIN
You want to sleep in a place called 'The Dead'?

DARRENCE
Maybe they're… nice? Hospitable?

ANJALIN
(Her smile vanishes)
What 'nice' people have you ever met, Darrence? Truly? Name one.

DARRENCE
Talon was… he was trying to help. Before I… And there were others. In the markets. Ordinary people.

ANJALIN
Ordinary people sell vegetables. They don't name their homes after corpses. But… you're right about the sun. And Scar's pace is slowing. Fine. We'll risk it. But if there aren't any 'nice' people, it's your fault. Agreed?

DARRENCE
Agreed.

(The perspective pulls back up to the clouds.)

THE VOICE (V.O.)
‘Morto’? Why are they heading there? And… has that village always been there? I don’t recall sanctioning a settlement in that valley. In fact… oh.

(The ‘camera’ tries to zoom closer to the village, but the image wavers, distorts, as if hitting an invisible barrier. A faint, discordant hum is heard.)

I’m… not permitted in that area. A blind spot. How intriguing. And how very, very concerning.

SCENE 2: THE VILLAGE OF THE DEAD

EXT. MORTO - TWILIGHT

The village is eerily quiet. The buildings are a haphazard mix of old wood and parts of broken-down carriages and airships. ‘People’ move in the streets, but their movements are slow, shuffling, and deliberate. Their eyes are dull, unfocused. Some are missing limbs, which have been replaced with crude prosthetics of wood and rusted metal. None speak.

Scar pads down the main street, his fiery presence causing the villagers to stop and stare with blank, unsettling curiosity. They don’t look afraid. They look… assessing.

Darrence and Anjalin find an inn. The sign, creaking in the wind, shows a skeletal horse. It’s part saloon, part lodging…the ‘Last Rest.’

They tie Scar to a hitching post (which he eyes with disdain but tolerates). The saloon doors swing open silently.

INT. THE LAST REST SALOON - NIGHT

The interior is dim, lit by flickering gas-lamps with green-tinted glass. The air smells of dust, old ale, and something faintly sweet and rotten. A few of the shambling villagers sit at tables, not drinking, not talking, just… existing.

But on a small, shadowed stage, a woman sings.

ZOI is pale, with hair the color of moonlight and eyes like polished jet. She wears a dress of faded velvet and lace. She holds an old, wired microphone, her voice a haunting, beautiful alto that wraps around a melancholy folk tune.

ZOI (SINGING)
“The road is long, the night is deep,
And promises are hard to keep…
So lay your burdens on the stone,
For flesh and blood are flesh and bone…”

Darrence is momentarily transfixed.

DARRENCE
(Whispering)
That’s… actually really good.

Anjalin ignores him. She strides to the bar and taps a small, tarnished bell. The thing is shockingly loud in the room.

ANJALIN
We’re just passing through. We need a room. One room, two beds. Or a pull-out couch. Anything.

DARRENCE
I’ll… look for the owner.

His eyes are drawn back to Zoi. As he watches, she finishes her verse, sets the microphone down on the edge of the stage, and begins walking towards them. And as she moves, every villager in the room turns their head in unison, their movements jerky, to watch her. They begin to stand, to shuffle, forming a silent, attentive semi-circle behind her.

Zoi reaches the bar, leaning on it with a serene smile. Up close, Darrence can see fine cracks, like porcelain, spider-webbing across her skin.

ZOI
Welcome to Morto, newcomers. I am Zoi. What is it you seek in the land of the quiet folk?

ANJALIN
(Unflinching)
A room. For the night. That’s all.

ZOI
Of course. Rest for the weary. I can do one better. A special, for travelers on a strange road. Buy one night, get the second night free. Should you… decide to stay longer. And we offer a complimentary breakfast. Our bacon is particularly… crisp.

She produces two heavy, iron keys from beneath the bar.

ANJALIN
(Taking a key)
Thank you.

Darrence takes his. As they turn to go, Zoi's voice stops them.

ZOI
Don't forget about your companion outside. The fiery one. Scar, is it? The night chill can be… draining, even for such a spirit.

Darrence freezes. Anjalin's eyes narrow to slits.

DARRENCE
Oh. Right. Thanks.

He hurries outside. The moment the door shuts, Anjalin turns back to the bar, her voice low and dangerous.

ANJALIN
How do you know his name?

ZOI
(Smiling cryptically)
Oh, look. He's back.

Darrence stumbles back in, his arms and face covered in fresh, shallow scratches. Perched on his head, looking immensely pleased with himself, is Scar in his small, house-cat form.

DARRENCE
He, uh, didn't want to be tied up. And he's heavier than he looks.

He gently lifts the purring flame-cat and hands him to Anjalin.

ZOI
You should all get some rest. The road waits for no one, not even the dead.

Anjalin holds Zoi's gaze for a beat longer, then turns, cradling Scar, and heads for the stairs. Darrence follows.

INT. INN HALLWAY / ROOMS - NIGHT

The hallway is narrow, the wallpaper peeling. Their rooms are adjacent. They pause.

DARRENCE

That was… weird.

ANJALIN
Get some sleep. Don't eat anything unless I check it first.

They enter their separate rooms.

INT. ANJALIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

The room is sparse, clean, and cold. Anjalin sets Scar down on the bed. He curls up, his flames providing the only warmth. From downstairs, Zoi's singing resumes. This time, it's a different song, older, in a language that prickles the skin. Anjalin tries to sleep, but the song weaves through the floorboards, a haunting lullaby. It continues, verse after verse, until the inn's old clock chimes midnight.

Abruptly, the singing stops.

The door to Anjalin's room creaks open. Zoi glides in, silent as a ghost. She goes straight to the bed, picks up the sleeping Scar, and sits in the room's single armchair, cradling him in her lap. She waits.

Anjalin's eyes snap open. She senses the wrongness immediately. She bolts upright, fire and blood flickering at her fingertips.

ANJALIN
Why are you in my room?

Scar is motionless in Zoi's lap. Not sleeping. Unnaturally still. His flames are gone, leaving only a warm, sculpted shape of crystalline ember and ash.

ZOI
I know where you are heading. The shiny, floating kingdom of the ancient machine. But that is not your true destination. The place you need to go… is beneath it. In the dark that the kingdom floats upon. In the pit it was built to seal.

ANJALIN
Why? Why would we go there?

ZOI
(Laughs softly)
To reveal the truth. And you… you want this little one's spirit back, don't you?

With her free hand, she summons a swirling, ethereal orb above her palm. Inside, a tiny, furious flame-cat shape paces and hisses silently. Anjalin's breath catches.

ANJALIN
You… you killed him? What truth? What are you talking about?

ZOI
I merely separated body and soul. A temporary state. And the truth… is what the gods tried to bury. They built their perfect kingdoms, their floating cities, on a foundation of lies. A foundation of bones and silenced history. What will you do, Anjalin of the Blood and Flame?

Anjalin looks from the soul-orb to Scar's inert body. Rage and a cold, calculating need war within her.

ANJALIN
We will go. We will go to this… pit. And you will give me his soul back.

ZOI
A bargain, then. I will join your journey as a guide. When we reach the precipice of the buried truth, his spirit is yours. Until then… he will still function. A golem of fire and memory. You can still ride.

She floats Scar's body back to the bed. It stands up, shakes itself, and looks at Anjalin with empty, glassy eyes. It moves, but it's a hollow imitation of life.

ANJALIN
(Voice trembling with suppressed fury)
Fine. Our path changes at first light.

ZOI
(Sipping tea that appears in her hand)
Indeed. Finish your rest. The dead do not need it, but the living… the living should cherish what little they have left.

She rises and glides out, closing the door behind her.

INT. ZOI'S PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

The room is not a bedroom. It's a shrine. Candles made of tallow burn with a green flame. The armchair is made of interlocked bones. Zoi sits, sipping her tea, and looks into a large, ornate mirror with a tarnished silver frame.

ZOI
Mirror, mirror on the wall… show me my Queen.

The mirror's surface swirls like dark oil. A figure appears, seated on a throne of shadow. It is draped in absolute black, a faceless silhouette, but its presence radiates ancient, terrifying authority.

Zoi bows her head.

ZOI
Your majesty. The pieces move as foreseen. The vessel of grief and the hollow man walk the path. Soon, we will descend to the place of sealing. The plan is set in motion. And once the others join… the dominos will begin to fall.

The faceless figure in the mirror tilts its head. No sound is heard, but Zoi listens intently, as if to a voice in her mind.

ZOI
Yes, my Queen. I understand. I will secure it. I will bring the First Sigh back to you. It belongs in the hands of the End, not lost in the dark.

The image in the mirror fades to black. Zoi rises, a devout smile on her cracked porcelain face.

ZOI
Goodbye, your majesty.

(The camera pulls back, out of Zoi's room, through the wall of the inn, showing the entire, silent, eerie village of Morto under the cold stars.)

SCENE 3: A BREAKFAST OF LIES

EXT. MORTO / INT. THE LAST REST - MORNING

(We pull back up to the sky.)

THE VOICE (V.O.)
A village of the undead. A necromancer of significant power. The Goddess of Death has always enjoyed her… enclaves. But so close to the surface? And luring travelers? This isn't just a refuge for the departed. This is a spider's web. What truth do they think is buried? And what does it have to do with… me?

INT. THE LAST REST - COMMON ROOM - MORNING

Darrence, looking weary but rested, enters the common room. A lavish breakfast buffet is laid out. Crispy bacon, golden waffles, fluffy eggs, sausages. It looks and smells delicious. The zombie-like villagers are nowhere to be seen.

Zoi appears beside him, startling him.

ZOI
Good morning. How did you sleep?

DARRENCE
Uh, fine. Thank you. The room was… quiet.

ZOI
The dead are excellent neighbors. They never argue. Now, please, eat. You have a long ride ahead.

DARRENCE
(Taking a plate)
It all looks amazing. I haven't had a proper breakfast in… well, a long time.

He piles his plate high. Zoi watches with an unreadable smile as he sits and begins to eat with gusto.

DARRENCE
(Mouth full)
This is incredible. The bacon is so crisp!

ZOI
(Joining him with an empty plate)
Yes. 'Everything' has its own unique texture, don't you think?

Darrence nods, happily chewing. He's almost finished his heaping plate when Anjalin enters. She takes in the scene…Darrence eating, Zoi smiling…and her expression hardens.

Zoi, without looking at Anjalin, makes a subtle, twisting motion with her hand over the table.

The illusion shatters.

The golden waffles become slabs of spongy, yellowed fat. The scrambled eggs morph into a mass of milky, unseeing eyes. The sausages are fingers, linked together. And the bacon…

Darrence looks down at the last strip of 'bacon' on his fork. It's a thin, crisped strip of flesh, with a tiny tattoo of a rose still visible on it. The crumbs on his plate are bits of gristle and bone.

He gags. He drops the fork, clapping a hand over his mouth, his face turning green. He stumbles from the table, retching.

ZOI

(Feigning concern)
What's wrong? You said it was good. Was my hospitality lacking?

Anjalin can't help it. A sharp, bitter laugh escapes her.

ANJALIN
You ate food… in a village called 'The Dead'… from a necromancer's buffet. What did you think it was, Darrence? Sourced from a happy farm?

DARRENCE
(Spitting into a napkin)
It… it looked real! It smelled real! It should have been safe!

Zoi plucks one of the 'fingers' from the platter and takes a delicate, crunching bite.

ZOI
My food is safe. For those with the proper… constitution. Now. I believe it is time to depart. The day won't wait.

She rises and glides towards her room. Darrence stares, horrified.

DARRENCE
How can you… how can you eat that?

Zoi pauses at her door, looking back.

ZOI
It's just meat, darling. Sustainance. One body sustaining another. The cycle is quite beautiful, if you shed your mortal prejudices. I'll fetch my things.

She disappears inside. Darrence turns to Anjalin, wiping his mouth.

DARRENCE
Why does Scar look… wrong? His fire's out. His eyes…

ANJALIN
She took his soul. He's a puppet now. Did she come to your room last night?

DARRENCE
No. Was she in yours?

ANJALIN
She killed my cat and changed our destination. We're not going to the Tech Kingdom anymore. We're going to a hole underneath it.

DARRENCE
What hole? What for?

ANJALIN
To ‘reveal the buried truth.’ Her words.

DARRENCE
What truth? Whose truth? This feels like a trap, Anjalin. A bad one. We should tell Sel. She can…

ANJALIN
If you’re going to contact her, do it discreetly. Zoi is powerful, and she’s watching. But we are going. I’m getting Scar’s soul back.

DARRENCE
(Seeing the determination in her eyes, he sighs)
Okay. Okay. I’ve got your back. We’ll do it your way.

INT. ZOI’S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Zoi stands before the mirror again.

ZOI
Mirror, mirror. A final audience before the descent.

The mirror shows the faceless Queen once more. Zoi listens to the silent instructions.

ZOI
Yes, my Queen. I understand the stakes. The Key is in play. The lock is rusted but holds. I will be the Hand that turns it. The Age of Light’s lie is ending.

She bows deeply. The mirror goes dark. She turns, her demeanor shifting to one of brisk purpose, and exits.

EXT. THE LAST REST - DAY

Zoi emerges, carrying a small, ancient-looking carpet bag. A carriage waits, hitched to two skeletal horses whose eye sockets burn with green flame. Scar’s body, now large and empty-eyed, stands ready.

ZOI
Are we prepared, travelers? For the road less… alive?

Darrence and Anjalin mount the soulless Scar. He feels different…cold, his movements slightly jerky.

DARRENCE
(To Anjalin, low)
I sent a pulse. A magical ‘whisper’ to Sel’s communication crystal. Just our coordinates and ‘detour.’ It was all I could manage.

Anjalin gives a barely perceptible nod.

ANJALIN
(Loudly)
We’re ready.

ZOI
Then let the journey to the beginning… begin.

She steps into her bone-carriage. The skeletal horses click into motion. Scar falls in behind, his flame-less paws leaving no mark on the dusty road. They move out of Morto, the silent villagers watching from their doorways as they pass.

(The camera follows them down the road, then pulls up, up into the sky.)

THE VOICE (V.O.)
A detour into the deep dark. A guide who serves the Goddess of Death. They seek a truth buried beneath a kingdom of machines. My kingdom. My… wife’s kingdom. This is not a random divergence. This is a plotted course. And I am not permitted to see its end. That’s… all for today, everyone. The theater is closing. Goodbye.

(The screen begins to fade to black, but instead of cutting, it seems to get sucked into a point of absolute darkness. The perspective plummets, through layers of cold and despair, into a realm of pure shadow.)

INT. THE DARK LORD’S CHAMBER - NIGHT

We are in a space with no dimensions, only a sense of crushing pressure and whispers. THE DARK LORD stands before a pool of liquid void, his back to us. He is tall, draped in robes that seem to devour the scant light.

He turns slowly. His face is handsome, ageless, but his eyes are voids containing dying stars.

THE DARK LORD
(His voice is a smooth, cultured baritone that resonates in the soul)

And how has the journey of our little ‘heroes’ been so far, hmm? Intriguing, isn’t it? The puppet, the vessel, and the grave-singer, walking into the foundation of the world.

He chuckles, a sound like distant tectonic plates shifting.

DARK LORD
I don’t know why I’m asking you this. As if you could respond. You’re just an audience. Witnesses to the final act of a very, very long play. But perhaps… you’re learning. Seeing the monochrome perspective they call ‘life’ for what it truly is: a brief, gray dream between the glorious darkness that was… and the glorious darkness that will be again.

He smiles, a terrifying, beautiful expression.

DARK LORD
Go on, then. Until next time. And remember… life is just a shadow. I am what casts it.

(He waves a dismissive hand. The screen doesn’t cut to black…it is consumed by the darkness from the edges in, until there is nothing left but silence and the faint, fading echo of his laugh.)

EPISODE 4: THE TRUTH

(COLD OPEN)

The screen remains in the pitch black from the end of the last episode. For a full ten seconds, there is only silence and the feeling of being watched.

Then, a faint, greenish light blooms, illuminating a vast, cavernous throne room.

INT. THE DARK LORD'S THRONE ROOM - NIGHT

The throne is not merely a chair. It is a grotesque monument, a sculpture of frozen agony. Figures are suspended within a substance like black ice…kings and queens in regal finery, gods and goddesses with divine light still dimming in their terrified eyes, warriors mid-scream. Their forms are arranged in a writhing, silent chorus of eternal torment, forming the seat and backing of the throne.

THE DARK LORD sits casually upon this horror. He sips tea from a delicate, bone-china cup that, on closer inspection, is crafted from a polished human skull…the plaque on its base reading faintly: 'Cpl. Aris, Nightguard of Melanie.'

He looks directly into the camera. Not at a point in the distance, but at us. His eyes, voids containing dying stars, hold a terrifying intimacy.

DARK LORD
I bet you all weren’t expecting me. A change in the programming schedule. The Voice… he doesn’t know you’re here. He doesn’t know I have you. The signal is… diverted.

He takes a slow sip, the gesture obscenely normal.

DARK LORD
Now you’re wondering, ‘Why?’ Why the private audience? Call it… a director’s cut. An unfiltered perspective. All the stories you’ve been told are painted in monochrome. Black and white. Good and evil. Light and dark. Such a boring palette. It’s up to you to learn to see the colors in between. To understand that the most beautiful truths are often woven from the darkest threads.

He sets the skull-cup down on the arm of his throne, which is the frozen shoulder of a weeping angel.

DARK LORD
But our time is short. The ushers are getting restless. It's time for you to go back to the main feature. Don't worry. I'll be watching. We're all watching.

He smiles, a chilling expression of genuine amusement.

DARK LORD
Goodbye. See you soon.

As he says "soon," the screen erupts in violent, chaotic static. Through the digital snow, we see his silhouette, calmly picking up the skull to take another sip.

STATIC. SCREEN GOES DEAD.

A beat of pure black silence.

Then, with a sound like tearing cloth, the image is violently yanked back.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
(Furious, strained)
Hello again.

The perspective is shaky, as if grabbed. We are soaring over landscapes at nauseating speed.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
Let's just… look at this. Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain. Or the one who briefly hijacked it.

(MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE - Ominous, with quick cuts of the throne of torment, the skull cup, and the static-filled smile.)

SCENE 1: THE FLOATING FOUNDATION

EXT. SKY - APPROACHING TECH KINGDOM - DAY

The view stabilizes, looking down. We see ZOI's bone-carriage, drawn by its skeletal steeds, moving along a high mountain pass. Behind it, the soulless SCAR carries ANJALIN and DARRENCE. They are small, determined specks.

The camera lifts, panning up to their destination.

The Tech Kingdom floats, a titanic geometric marvel. The TOP SIDE is a breathtaking metropolis of living alloy that shifts and reconfigures, crystalline spires that catch the sun, and rivers of pure energy flowing through transparent channels like glowing bloodstreams. It is a vision of perfect, sterile utopia.

The camera rotates, showing the UNDERSIDE. This is the kingdom's guts. A forest of gargantuan support pylons thrum with power. Factories belch controlled plasma. Mech-forges hammer day and night, assembling warrior drones and siege constructs in relentless, automated silence. It is a hive of perpetual war preparation.

And beneath that, holding the entire floating landmass aloft, is not rock or engine, but a CRATER. A vast, circular maw of pure blackness. It doesn't look carved; it looks bitten out of reality. And within that darkness, faint, phosphorescent layers can be glimpsed, stacked like a vertical dungeon: swirling clouds (Sky), pulsing magma (Fire), churning abyssal currents (Ocean), shifting shadows (Shadow), absolute silence (Void), and at the very bottom, a glimpse of solid, primordial earth.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
(Quiet, almost to himself)
My wife's masterpiece. The Seal. The Lock. It keeps everything… inconvenient… away from our land. The chaos, the old gods, the unresolved past. Out of sight, out of mind. And now… they're going to poke a hole in it. Everything is going to change.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - CONTINUOUS

Darrence stares up at the majestic, terrifying sight.

DARRENCE
It's… beautiful. In a terrifying way. But what is that? That hole underneath it all? It looks like a wound.

ANJALIN
(Not looking at him, staring straight ahead)
That's the place. Where all the secrets they didn't want us to know are buried. The foundation of their perfect world.

DARRENCE
Why would 9906 help them? He seems… logical. Why help build a prison?

ANJALIN
I don't know his reasons. Did you send the signal to Sel? Does she know about the detour?

DARRENCE

I sent a pulse. Just coordinates and ‘detour.’ I don’t know if she got it or when she’ll come. But… maybe 9906 will be reasonable. Maybe he’s different.

ANJALIN
(Turns her head, her eyes cold)
Shut up about the kindness, Darrence. Just shut up. Look what listening to you got us in Morto. He might be ‘reasonable,’ or he might turn us into scrap for his forges. Be ready for ‘might.’

DARRENCE
(Jaw tight)
Okay.

Zoi’s carriage comes to a halt before a massive, sheer cliff face that acts as a landing platform gateway to the underside. A sleek, humanoid 9906 MODEL, armed with a pulsating rifle, strides forward.

SCENE 2: THE GATEKEEPER & THE DESCENT

The perspective shifts to behind Zoi’s carriage window. She rolls it down. The bot’s optical sensor scans her, its face a blank plate.

9906 MODEL
State purpose. This is a restricted defense sector. Organic lifeforms are not permitted.

ZOI
(Her voice sweet, melodic)
I am here with Anjalin of the Blood and Flame. I believe Lord Prime 9906 is expecting her? We are her… escort.

Before the bot can respond, there is a hum of anti-gravity. PRIME 9906 descends from an opening above, flanked by SEL and SCARLET. They land gracefully. Sel looks calm, intrigued. Scarlet’s expression is unreadable behind her diplomatic smile.

PRIME 9906
(His voice is a calibrated baritone)
Sel informed me of an incoming consultation. She did not mention a… necrotic entourage. You are Zoi. Sister of Necro. Sister-in-law to the Goddess of Death, Anqounet. Your presence is an unforeseen variable.

Zoi steps from her carriage and executes a perfect, old-world curtsy, her dress rustling like dry leaves.

ZOI

The honor is mine, Lord Prime. I serve as a guide. The paths to truth are often through places my… specialty… illuminates.

PRIME 9906
(Optics flickering as he processes)
Follow me. The access point is not for the faint of essence.

He leads them to the cliff face, which ripples and opens like mercury, revealing a vast elevator platform hovering over the terrifying maw of the Crater. One of his bots stands at a control console.

Prime 9906 turns, blocking their path onto the platform. His gaze sweeps over them…Darrence's nervous energy, Anjalin's cold determination, Zoi's serene malice, Sel's calculating look, Scarlet's observant silence.

PRIME 9906
Listen closely. This platform will descend through the stratified prison realms to the Earth-Layer…the bedrock of this reality. Each layer you pass is a sealed gateway. Sky. Fire. Ocean. Shadow. Silence and more. Do not attempt to leave the platform between levels. More importantly: do not use active magic or significant power discharges while in transit or in the Earth-Layer. The seals are sensitive to metaphysical resonance. You are not just visitors; you are potential keys.

He leans forward slightly, the blue light in his optics intensifying.

PRIME 9906
If you open a gateway, do not pray for mercy. Pray for a quick extinction. For what will emerge will not be a monster or an army. It will be an ecosystem of ancient rage. And it will hunger for the world that caged it. Do you understand?

They all nod, a solemn, shared dread settling over them.

SEL
We understand. We're just here for… historical research.

Prime 9906 steps aside. One by one, they step onto the platform. Sel, Scarlet, Zoi, Anjalin, Darrence. The bot at the console presses a button.

The platform gives a slight lurch and begins its silent descent into the abyss. They watch as Prime 9906, standing at the edge of the cliff, grows smaller and smaller.

PRIME 9906
(Whispering to himself, unheard by them)

The Dark Lord's shadow grows longer. And he sends these pieces into the deep. Why? What lock are they meant to turn? Or what prisoner are they meant to meet?

SCENE 3: THE EARTH-LAYER & THE PRISONER

EXT./INT. STRATIFIED REALMS / EARTH-LAYER - CONTINUOUS

The descent is a nightmare panorama. They pass through:
- THE SKY LAYER: A perpetual hurricane, with winged shadows screaming past the platform.
- THE FIRE LAYER: Rivers of magma where shapes of tortured giants flow like slag.
- THE OCEAN LAYER: An inverted ocean, its pressure palpable, with leviathan eyes blinking in the depths.
- THE SHADOW LAYER: Absolute darkness, where the only light is the platform's glow, and whispers claw at the mind.
- THE SILENCE LAYER: A vacuum of sound so complete it becomes a physical pain.

Finally, they settle on the EARTH-LAYER. It is not natural earth. It is a cavern of impossible scale, the 'ground' a compacted mass of fossilized bones, ancient armor, and petrified roots. The air is thick, cold, and heavy with the smell of ozone and decay. Veins of a pulsating, black-purple substance…like solidified gloom…run through the walls and floor, throbbing weakly.

SCARLET
(Wrapping her arms around herself)
The magic here… it's not just dark. It's old. It's the dark that was here before light was given a name.

ZOI
(Sniffing the air, eyes closed in perverse pleasure)
I can taste the death. Centuries of it. Millennia. But this blackness… these 'veins.' They are not mere residue. They feel… alive. And wounded.

She points. The throbbing veins converge in the distance, leading towards a colossal structure.

SEL
This layer is the prison for conceptual evils. Primordial mistakes. The things you don't just kill, you bury. It must be one of them causing this.

They follow the veins. The path is littered with the bodies of dead birds…ravens, their feathers dull and lifeless. As they walk, a sound begins: the cawing of ravens, but the caws form words, spoken by a hundred raspy throats.

RAVENS (V.O.)
Ab-y-ri-a… Ab-y-ri-a… Goddess… waits… Goddess… hates…

DARRENCE
(Voice trembling)
Do you hear that?

SEL
Phantoms. Echoes. Nothing to fear.

Suddenly, Anjalin stops.

ANJALIN
Why does that vein… look like it's twitching?

The nearest thick vein of black-purple substance contracts. Then, like a whip, it lashes out from the ground, wrapping around her ankle. More erupt, snaring Sel, Scarlet, Zoi, and Darrence. They are yanked off their feet and dragged at terrifying speed across the bone-field towards the central structure…a monolithic, ruined temple.

They are hauled inside, through grand, broken halls, and slammed down in the center of a vast chamber.

In the middle of the room, suspended by countless heavy chains anchored into the very fabric of the cavern, hovers a woman.

ABYRIA. She is pale, her hair a waterfall of black streaked with silver, her body clad in tattered robes that might once have been glorious. The chains…each link inscribed with god-runes of binding…pierce her shoulders, her wrists, her ankles, holding her in a cruciform position. The pulsing black veins originate from her, snaking out from her back and the points where the chains enter her flesh, spreading through the entire Earth-Layer like a parasitic root system.

She opens her eyes. They are pools of perfect, starless black.

SEL
(Struggling against the vein-tentacle)
Who are you?

ABYRIA
(Her voice is a haunting duet…a soft whisper and a deep, resonant echo)
I have been called the Goddess of Darkness. The Mother of Death. The First Spirit. My name… is Abyria.

SEL
(Her eyes widen with genuine shock)
You… you're a myth. The original sin. The evil that was born with this world.

ABYRIA
A myth to those who locked the book. A sin to those who wrote the laws. ‘Evil’ is a point of view, little queen.

ZOI
Why trap us? What do you want?

ABYRIA
I am not trapping you. The bindings react to threat. You can free yourselves. Use your magic. Your power. Break the grip.

ANJALIN
(Struggling)
Darrence already used his! On the way down! He turned invisible when he got scared!

DARRENCE
I panicked! It was a reflex!

Abyria’s starless eyes fix on Darrence. A faint, sorrowful smile touches her lips.

ABYRIA
Ah. A key has already turned. A tiny turn. But enough.

The vein-tentacles retract, depositing them ungently on the floor. They scramble to their feet.

ABYRIA
I know why you are here. The blood-fire sorceress seeks a truth about herself. The necromancer seeks an artifact for her queen. The diamond sisters seek an advantage. The hollow man… seeks absolution he will never find.

SCARLET
How could you possibly know that?

ABYRIA
I hear the realms. Through these veins. Through the chains. They are not ‘gulp’ or ‘tentacles.’ They are my nerves. My atrophied senses. Every whisper in the Sky, every scream in the Fire, every sigh in the Silence… it all flows back to me.

ANJALIN
And they didn’t stop you? The gods who put you here?

ABYRIA

They don’t know. They thought they buried me. They did not realize they planted me. Now… you asked a question, daughter of war. ‘Why?’

Abyria’s gaze grows distant. The black veins in the room begin to pulse with a soft light.

ABYRIA
Let me show you. Let me tell you the story of the beginning. Not the one they carved in temples. The true one.

The chamber darkens, the light coalescing into a shimmering, ghostly projection around her. As she begins to speak, a figure materializes subtly in the shadows of the projection…THE DARK LORD, leaning against a spectral wall, listening with a satisfied smile. No one in the room notices him. Only the camera sees.

ABYRIA’S STORY (VISUALIZED)

SCENE 4: THE STORY OF TWO GODS

The projection becomes a corporate boardroom in a sleek, futuristic city. A kind-faced, weary CEO (THE GOD OF LIFE, mortal form) is in a meeting.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
My husband was not always a god. He was a man. A healer. His soul was haunted by a quiet sorrow…the brokenness of the world. He dedicated his life to mending it.

Terrorists storm the building. A SUICIDE BOMBER, radiating despair, bursts into the boardroom. Panic. The CEO sees the detonator. Instead of running, he moves towards the bomber. He embraces him.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
His final test was not of power, but of compassion. He chose to absorb the blast. To save his team. To try, in one final act, to heal even the source of the hate.

A blinding explosion. Not of fire, but of pure, white light. From the ashes, the CEO rises, transformed. His mortal shell is gone. He is radiant, serene, filled with an overwhelming power of creation and nurture. THE GOD OF LIFE is born. He kneels, touching the ash of the bomber, and a single, pure white flower blooms from it.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
The explosion did not kill him. It unveiled him. His divinity, always within, was unleashed. He declared a new mission: to heal the world itself.

We see a MONTAGE: The God of Life walking war-torn lands, flowers blooming in his footsteps. Plagues receding. Factions laying down arms. A century of golden, endless peace…THE BLOOM.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
But the universe demands balance. For every action, a reaction. From a perfect, selfless death somewhere else in the cosmos… I was born.

We see the birth of ABYRIA…not from light, but from the beautiful, terrifying emptiness of a star going gently into that good night. She is Death, not as a skull, but as a necessary, beautiful conclusion.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
For fifty years, we warred. A primal dance. Creation versus Release. Life versus Death. But in the clash, we saw each other's truth. Respect… turned to love.

A stunning visual: The God of Life and Abyria, his light and her darkness, not cancelling but complementing, swirling together in a cosmic dance that creates a new, stable harmony. From their union, children are born: LANA, then the twins ANUBIS and Anqounet.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
Two hundred years of harmony. A family. A balanced cosmos. He believed his story was complete.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
He was wrong.

A tear in reality. A figure steps through. THE DARK LORD. He is the God of Life's physical mirror, but his essence is pure negation. The space around him grays and dies.

DARK LORD (in flashback)
"I am what you should have been. Strength without mercy. Order without compromise. I have purged the weakness from my universe. Now, I will purge it from yours."

A brutal, heartbreaking fight. The God of Life fights with nurturing power, creating shields of life, vines to bind, healing light. The Dark Lord's touch unmakes them. He doesn't destroy; he erases. Finally, the Dark Lord grasps the God of Life's face. With a wrenching, silent scream, the God of Life's light is extinguished, his form dissolving into motes of dust that are then vacuumed into nothingness. He is unmade.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
(Anguish in her voice)
My husband was erased. Not killed. Unmade. As if he never was.

The Dark Lord stumbles, clutching his head. Flashes of the God of Life's memories flood him…the love for Abyria, the joy of his children, the peace of his purpose. A horrific, all-consuming envy twists his face.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
He looted the memories of the man he killed. And he saw a life he had scorched from his own existence. He wanted it. So he molded himself. Became a perfect replica. And slipped into the life he had stolen.

We see the Dark Lord, now mimicking the God of Life's gentle demeanor, approach Abyria. She embraces him, but her expression is uncertain, pained.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
I felt the void where his compassion should have been. The coldness behind his eyes. But love… love chooses to believe the lie. For the sake of our children. For the sake of the balance.

The projection shows Abyria growing suspicious. She confronts the imposter in their private gardens. She tries to use her power of death to probe his true essence. The imposter, the Dark Lord, reacts not with anger, but with a cruel smile. He deflects her power, using it against her, the death-energy twisting back to form the very chains that now bind her. Other gods arrive…the Voice, the Goddess, others…seeing only Abyria 'attacking' their beloved Life-God.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
They called it corruption. A fall from grace. They said the Darkness in me had finally consumed my love. They did not see the void in him. They only saw my power turned against my 'husband.'

A montage of her imprisonment: gods and robots (a young 9906 among them) building the layers around her, sealing her away. The Dark Lord, wearing the face of her husband, watches with sorrowful eyes that, to the camera, gleam with triumph.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
They built my tomb around me. And year after year, the visits stopped. My children were told I was lost to madness. And this place… became a dumping ground. Every 'evil,' every 'monster,' was thrown down here with me. So I learned to speak to them. To control some. To send them back, screaming, through the cracks, to show them all the monsters they had created!

The projection shows shadowy creatures clawing their way up through the layers, causing brief, bloody chaos in the upper realms before being destroyed.

ABYRIA (V.O.)
And so they put locks on the layers. They took everything. My family. My sky. My husband. They left me with only the dark… and the truth.

The projection fades. The chamber is dark again, lit only by the pulsing veins. Abyria hangs in her chains, weeping black tears that evaporate into smoke.

SCENE 5: A DEAL WITH THE FIRST EVIL

The room is silent. Darrence looks shattered. Anjalin's face is a mask of cold fury. Sel is calculating, her mind racing. Scarlet looks horrified. Zoi seems… reverent.

ABYRIA
Now you know. The foundation of your world is a lie. The God of Light and Life is a thief, a murderer, wearing a dead man's face. And I… am the original crime he covered up.

SEL
(Stepping forward, her voice firm)
You can come back to the surface. With us. You can have your sky again. But you will help us. You will stand with us against the gods. Against the imposter.

Abyria's starless eyes lock onto Sel's.

ABYRIA
You offer me vengeance wrapped in freedom. A deal, little queen? After millennia in chains, do I have a choice?

SCARLET
You have the choice to help us make it right.

Abyria nods slowly.

ABYRIA
Then it is a deal.

SCARLET
Stand back.

Scarlet closes her eyes. Her hands glow with a complex, silver energy…not destructive, but unraveling. She touches the central chain at Abyria's chest. The god-runes flare in protest, then shatter like glass. Chain by chain, Scarlet breaks the seals. The sound is like mountains cracking.

The last chain falls. Abyria drops, but Sel and Anjalin catch her. She is feather-light, trembling. The moment her feet touch the ground, the entire network of black veins in the chamber flashes brightly and then begins to dissolve, turning to dust. A sigh of relief seems to pass through the very earth.

ABYRIA
(Weakly)
Thank you.

SCARLET
Sel will take you to the Diamond Kingdom. You will be safe. You can rest. And… you can see your children. They are not all lost to you.

Abyria's breath hitches. A single, shimmering tear, this one clear as crystal, rolls down her cheek.

ABYRIA
Lana… Anubis… Anqounet…

SEL
Darrence. You will stay with Anjalin.

ANJALIN
Fine. But only for a little while.

They help Abyria walk out of the temple, back to the platform. Sel, Scarlet, and Abyria step into a pre-arranged teleportation circle that flares to life. With a flash, they are gone.

Zoi, Darrence, and Anjalin stand on the platform as it begins its ascent.

ZOI
(Smiling at Anjalin)
Our deal remains, blood-fire girl. The soul for the truth. But my part here is done. The truth is revealed. Farewell.

Before Anjalin can speak, Zoi dissolves into a swirl of shadows and grave-dust, vanishing.

ANJALIN
Wait! She still has his…

But Zoi is gone.

DARRENCE
She still has his soul.

ANJALIN
(Voice thick with rage and despair)
Yes. She does.

They ride the soulless Scar in silence away from the Tech Kingdom, back into the wilderness.

SCENE 6: THE LOCK IS BROKEN

EXT. EARTH-LAYER - TEMPLE - MOMENTS LATER

The chamber is empty. The dissolved veins are just grey dust.

From the deepest pit of the temple, a sound. A slow, rhythmic THUD. Like a colossal heartbeat.

The floor of the chamber cracks. A giant, clawed hand, dark red and gnarled like ancient wood, erupts from the ground. Then another.

VARNOK, THE KING OF TITANS, pulls himself free. He is enormous, a walking cataclysm. His upper body is a fortress of twisted, bark-like flesh, with branch-arms ending in scythe-like claws. His face is a nightmare of glowing yellow eyes and a permanent, jagged-toothed grin of infinite fury. Remnants of divine chains, now broken, hang from his limbs. His lower body is monstrously powerful, built for trampling divine cities.

He stands to his full height, cracks his neck, and unleashes a ROAR.

The roar is a physical wave. It shakes the Earth-Layer. It travels up. We see it ripple through the Silence Layer, shattering the quiet. It quakes through the Shadow Layer, dispersing the dark. It boils the Ocean Layer. It ignites the Fire Layer into an inferno. It tears through the Sky Layer as a superstorm.

In the Tech Kingdom above, alarms blare. Prime 9906 watches his sensors go haywire.

PRIME 9906
The seals… breached. Not just opened. Shattered. What have they done?

EXT. EARTH-LAYER - CONTINUOUS

Varnok's roar becomes a command. From cracks, from shadows, from the very air, his army emerges: Titans of stone and rage, monsters of forgotten myth, behemoths of pure elemental chaos. They gather around their freed king.

Varnok points one massive, clawed finger upwards. The silent command is clear: Ascend. Conquer. Destroy.

The horde begins to climb, to fly, to tear their way up through the crumbling layers towards the world above.

CLOSE ON: VARNOK'S EYE. The glowing yellow orb reflects the chaos. The reflection shifts, deepens, until we are no longer looking at the chamber, but into a deeper, colder darkness within the Titan King's own mind.

In that mental darkness, a silhouette forms. A woman of pure, sleek blackness, like a shadow given perfect, predatory form. MELANIE, THE GODDESS OF DARKNESS.

MELANIE (V.O.)
(Her voice is a razor whisper in the mind)
You have someone coming for you now, Dark Lord. The true wife. The wronged mother. If she does not tear your stolen face from your skull… then I will. I so enjoy collecting the trophies you leave behind.

In the reflection, we see her smile…a slash of white in the perfect black.

MELANIE (V.O.)
The game has truly begun. Let the hunt commence.

The image in Varnok's eye winks out, returning to the chaotic rally of his army.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK, faster and faster, up through the raging layers, past the panicking Tech Kingdom, into the open sky, until the planet is a sphere below us.

ABSOLUTE SILENCE.

EPISODE 5: THE COUNCIL OF SHADOWS

(COLD OPEN)

The screen flickers to life. The usual, serene cosmic backdrop is absent. Instead, we see a shaky, close-up view of a swirling nebula, as if The Voice is nervously pacing.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
(Hushed, strained)
Oh. It's… it's just you all. Good. The signal is… secure. For now. Follow me. Quickly.

The perspective plummets, not with its usual graceful sweep, but in a jittery, hurried descent. It zeroes in on the familiar, fiery silhouette of Anjalin's treehouse, nestled in its dark forest.

THE VOICE (V.O.)
They did it. The locks are broken. The seals are shattered. Every realm, every layer…it's all connected again. The prison is open. And they…they are coming. Soon. I wonder…what in all creation are they going to do?

(MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE - The theme is now more discordant, with visuals of breaking chains, roaring titans, and panicked crowds.)

SCENE 1: AFTERMATH & AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR

INT. ANJALIN'S TREEHOUSE - LIVING AREA - DAY

The mood inside is heavy. ANJALIN sits stiffly on the couch, staring at a crackling news hologram. The images show distant, blurred shapes moving on horizons, panicked reports from outlying villages. DARRENCE paces, running a hand through his hair.

DARRENCE
Did we…did we really let them all out? Back into the world?

ANJALIN
(Without looking away from the screen)
It was you. Your little panic attack on the platform. Your ‘reflex.’ But ‘we’ carried you down there. So yes. They are free. And I bet the ‘something’ we have to do now is find a way to stop them from turning this world into a crater.

Before Darrence can reply, the air in the center of the room warps. A figure materializes. It is SEL. But something is… off. Her posture is slightly different. The familiar, calculating sharpness in her eyes is replaced by a colder, more ancient amusement. The smile doesn’t reach her eyes.

DARK LORD (DISGUISED AS SEL)
Good morning, my little catalysts. I have a new journey for you today. Consider it… damage control.

Darrence flinches. Anjalin is on her feet in an instant, blood and fire shimmering at her knuckles.

DARRENCE
What journey? What do you want?

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
(He ignores Anjalin’s threat, as one would ignore a kitten’s hiss)
You are to travel to the Heartwood. The Nexus. The Tree of Life itself.

ANJALIN
What? Where is it? Why?

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
It is the oldest living thing. The anchor point of this reality. It is where… questions find answers. Oh, and you won’t be going alone. Every realm needs representation.

He gestures casually to the side. The air ripples, and three figures step through a temporary rift.

First, a GNOME, barely three feet tall, with clever eyes, goggles on his forehead, and a toolbelt laden with strange devices. Next, an ELF, elegant but with a perpetually worried expression, her ears twitching at every slight sound. Finally, an OGRE, massive and stoic, with a single, complex-looking pocket watch held carefully in one giant hand.

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
They will be your companions. Consider them… cultural ambassadors from the newly freed strata.

GNOMEBLELY
(Bowing with a flourish)

Hello! I shall begin introductions! I am Gnomeblely! Of the Deep-Stone Clan, Fire Layer! My talent is applied kinetics and metallurgical persuasion! I can make a weapon, a shield, or a rather nice tea kettle from almost anything I find!

JALEY
(The Elf, wringing her hands)
I am Jaley. Of the Whisperwind Clan, Sky Layer. My…my affinity is… probabilistic deflection. I… I'm afraid I bring misfortune. Terribly sorry.

EDENBER
(The Ogre, his voice a low rumble)
Edenber. Stone-Hide Tribe, Earth-Layer. I halt the flow of chronons. With this.

He holds up the watch. For a second, the very crackle of the fire in the hearth seems to slow and deepen.

The Dark Lord, as Sel, smiles that wrong smile.

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
Lovely. Now, get acquainted. The Tree awaits. I'll be watching.

He vanishes, not in Sel's usual teleportation flash, but by dissolving into tendrils of shadow that sink into the floorboards.

Anjalin rounds on the newcomers.

ANJALIN
Why did Sel summon you? What does she really want?

GNOMEBLELY
Oh, it wasn't her, precisely! A being of immense shadow-power came to our realms as they crumbled. Said the 'Dark Lady Sel' needed champions. That a great war was coming to protect all realms from a 'consuming danger.' We volunteered! For the cause!

DARRENCE
Consuming danger? The Titans?

GNOMEBLELY
Precisely! To keep everyone safe! A noble quest!

EDENBER
(Looking Darrence up and down, his massive brow furrowed)
You. You are the key-that-turned? You look… insubstantial. Like a dry twig. The kind that snaps underfoot.

DARRENCE
(Jaw tightening)
I’m not weak.

ANJALIN
(Scoffs)
You are. And we have a walking bad-luck charm and a walking clock. We’re a perfect disaster squad. Let’s just go.

EDENBER
(Chuckles, a sound like rocks grinding)
Even she says it. Little man. Not like Gnome. Gnome is small but dense. Strong. You are… hollow.

SCENE 2: THE ROAD TO THE HEARTWOOD

EXT. TREEHOUSE - DAY

They file out. Gnomeblely’s eyes land on SCAR, standing motionless by the tree, an empty vessel.

GNOMEBLELY
Ah! A construct! Excellent! A four-legged motive force! With your permission, I shall fabricate a conveyance! Efficiency in travel!

ANJALIN
Do whatever you want to it. It’s not my pet anymore. It’s a shell.

GNOMEBLELY
Why do you say such a thing?

ANJALIN
That’s a story for another day. If we live.

GNOMEBLELY
Ah. Understood.

In a blur of motion that defies his size, Gnomeblely is a whirlwind of activity. He pulls tools, sheets of scrap metal from his bag, and components from the environment. In under three minutes, a sturdy, if bizarre-looking, carriage is affixed to Scar’s harness…a mix of polished stone, woven vines, and humming crystal.

The others stare, impressed despite themselves.

GNOMEBLELY
All aboard! The Heartwood Express departs!

They climb in. Gnomeblely takes the driver's seat, gives the leads a confident flick, and the soulless Scar begins to walk.

(Aerial shot of the strange carriage moving down the forest path, a tiny bubble of hope heading into a gathering storm.)

SCENE 3: A DARKNESS IN THE WORKROOM

INT. DIAMOND KINGDOM - SEL'S LABORATORY - DAY

The figure of SEL stands before SAVIOR, the God-Killer robot, which is in standby mode. The figure reaches out and runs a finger down its cold, alloy chest.

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
You are a fascinating piece of work. A scalpel meant for divine surgery. But you lack… passion. The raw, beautiful fury of my children. Still, you have your uses.

The door hisses open. SCARLET walks in, carrying a sealed, lead-lined case.

SCARLET
Oh. I wasn't expecting you back so soon, sister. How went the… recruitment?

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
(Turning, the perfect mimicry of Sel's smirk)
Enlightening. Speaking to our new 'guest,' Abyria, has revealed certain… structural weaknesses in our enemy's domain. Poetic, isn't it? The first wife knows where the foundations are cracked.

SCARLET
Ooh. And what will you add to Savior this time? Something explosive?

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
Something elegant. A predictive combat algorithm. He will analyze their movements, their rage-patterns, and attack not at their strongest, but in the perfect micro-moment of transition. When offense becomes overextension. When defense becomes rigid.

SCARLET
That sounds vicious. I like it. Now, pardon me, I need to borrow your particle accelerator.

She walks over to a massive, ringed device humming in the corner. She opens her case, revealing the pulsing, black-purple clump of material taken from Abyria's prison veins. She carefully places it in the input chamber.

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
You harvested the residual darkness from the binding veins. To create a concentrated clump of primordial shadow. What do you intend to study, Scarlet? Its magical resonance? Its decay rate?

SCARLET
(Smiling enigmatically)
Something like that. I want to see what happens when you purify despair.

She activates the accelerator. The machine whines, energy arcing. The clump is shredded, analyzed, and reconstituted. On the other side, a new substance drops into a containment field…a droplet of absolute, lightless void, so dark it seems to suck the color from the room around it.

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
Fascinating. Good luck with your… research.

SCARLET
I'll need it. Goodbye, sister.

She takes the contained droplet and leaves. The moment the door shuts, the figure of Sel seems to relax, then dissolve. The shadows in the room deepen, converging into the true form of THE DARK LORD. He glides to Sel's private desk, opens a hidden compartment, and removes a book bound in what looks like void-touched leather.

He opens it. Instead of pages, it's a gateway. He becomes smoke and shadow, flowing into the book. It snaps shut.

(CLOSE ON the book. It vibrates slightly.)

DARK LORD (V.O., from within the book)
Now… back to our heroes. The play must continue.

SCENE 4: THE TITAN OF SORROW

EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

The carriage rolls through an increasingly silent, oppressive forest. The birds have stopped singing.

THE VOICE (V.O.)

(Anxious, narrating)
We rejoin our unlikely fellowship on the path to the Heartwood. But the world is no longer safe for travel. Look ahead…what seems a mere geological feature is, in this new age, a predator.

A massive, grey, moss-covered boulder sits squarely in the middle of the path a hundred yards ahead.

Gnomeblely brings the carriage to a gentle halt. He hops down, his face serious. He opens the carriage door and puts a finger to his lips.

GNOMEBLELY
(Whispering)
Quietly. All of you. Out. Move with the grace of falling snow. That is not a stone. It is the Titan of Sorrow. From my realm. One of the Emotional Primordials.

JALEY
(Whispering, terrified)
How can you tell? And what is it?

GNOMEBLELY
By the color. The texture. It weeps lichen. It feeds on despair and creates more. Do not attract its attention. It is… melancholic, but its grief is a weapon.

They slip out, moving with exaggerated care. But Scar, the soulless construct, lets out a grinding sound as it shifts its weight. Then another. It's trying to back away from the oppressive aura.

ANJALIN
(Whispering harshly)
Scar, no!

It's too late. The 'boulder' shudders. A deep, wet, shuddering sigh echoes through the woods. Then, it begins to cry.

The sound is not just loud. It is a physical, psychic assault. It's the sound of lost love, of final goodbyes, of irredeemable failure. The air vibrates. The travelers clutch their ears, blood trickling from Darrence's and Jaley's. Trees nearby splinter from the sonic pressure.

The Titan lurches up, revealing stony legs. Its 'face' is a smoother section where two rivulets of acidic tears are now flowing. It doesn't look at the people. Its blank, weeping gaze is fixed on the source of the noise: Scar.

With surprising speed, it lumbers after the flame-cat construct. Scar, driven by base programming, turns and runs.

GNOMEBLELY
No! Don’t run! It triggers the chase instinct!

From crevices on the Titan’s back, small, stony creatures with beaks…‘Grief-Gremlins’...detach and take flight, swarming after Scar. They catch up, pecking and clawing, ripping chunks of crystalline flesh from his body. He stumbles.

The Titan of Sorrow reaches down, its massive hand enveloping the struggling construct. It brings Scar to its ‘mouth’...a crack in the stone…and the acidic tears dissolve him as he’s pushed inside. A final, silent crunch.

The crying stops. The Titan settles back down onto the path, once again an inert, mossy boulder, slightly larger now.

The group is frozen in horror.

GNOMEBLELY
(Voice raw)
Come. Now. While it digests.

They run, sprinting past the Titan, into a sudden change in the forest. The trees become older, grander, glowing with a soft internal light. The air is warm and sweet. They have entered the sacred grove of the Heartwood.

JALEY
(Trembling)
Oh, that poor creature… it didn’t deserve that.

ANJALIN
(Her voice cold, but her fists are clenched)
He wasn’t alive. He was a puppet. A golem. His suffering ended millennia ago.

JALEY
It’s still sad.
Of course. Here is the revised section incorporating your changes: The Dark Lord remains disguised as Sel, Lilith and Dave are the King and Queen of the Gods, and Daviet is the God of Hatred.

EDENBER
(Rumbling)
Would have been easier if the rock-thing ate the twig-man instead. Less noise.

Suddenly, the figure of SEL appears before them on the path. It's the same disguise they saw at the treehouse, but here, in the sacred grove, the wrongness is more pronounced…a subtle, cold energy bleeding through the imitation.

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
Ah. You made it. Mostly intact. The Tree is waiting. The Council is convened. Follow me. And don't touch anything. The roots have memories, and they bite.

They follow the false Sel, a group of weary and shell-shocked travelers led by a mirage, down a path of glowing roots to the base of the TREE OF LIFE.

It is not merely a large tree. It is a world unto itself. Its trunk is wider than a city, its branches holding entire ecosystems, its leaves shimmering with captured sunlight. A great door, shaped like intertwined vines, is open at its base.

TREE OF LIFE (V.O.)
(A voice like rustling leaves and deep, slow earth)
The convened may enter. The balance is to be spoken for.

SCENE 5: THE COUNCIL OF SHADOWS

INT. TREE OF LIFE - COUNCIL CHAMBER

The chamber is a vast, circular room within the tree, the walls alive with flowing sap-light. A round table, grown from the tree itself, dominates the room. Seated around it is a gathering of power the world has not seen in millennia.

- On one side: LILITH, THE GODDESS, Queen of the Gods, radiating an aura of majestic, implacable authority. Beside her sits DAVE, THE GOD KING (THE VOICE), looking uncharacteristically solemn and grounded. Next to him is their son, DAVIET, THE GOD OF HATRED, whose youthful face is a mask of simmering, barely-contained wrath.
- Opposite them: SEALVENA, SELENA, and SCARLET...the Diamond Sisters. The real Sel is here, seated between her sisters.
- Another side: STAN, the ancient robot, and PRIME 9906, both radiating silent, calculating intensity.
- The final side: LANA, the Goddess of Life, beside her husband NECRO, Lord of the Undead. With them are ZOI, Anqounet (Goddess of Death), ANUBIS (God of Funerary Rites), and, seated with painful dignity, ABYRIA, the freed Mother of Death.

Darrence, Anjalin, and their companions are guided to stand behind the Diamond Sisters' seats.

The door whispers shut. All eyes turn to the new arrivals, focusing on the figure of "Sel" who led them in. Confusion ripples through the room. The real Sel's eyes widened slightly. Lilith's gaze turns icy with suspicion. Dave leans forward, studying the double.

The figure of Sel walks calmly to the head of the table, but does not sit.

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
Thank you for gathering on such short notice.

The voice is Sel's, but there's a hollow resonance to it. Then, the figure raises its hands.

DARK LORD (AS SEL)
This mask was a courtesy. A familiar face to ease the journey. But for truths of this magnitude, only the true form will do.

The air around the figure begins to smear. Sel's features run like wet paint, dripping away into shadows that swirl upward. The practical clothing of a queen dissolves, replaced by billowing robes of absolute black, shot through with streaks of white and blue that shimmer like captured starlight or frozen lightning. The figure grows taller, more imposing.

Where Sel's face was, there is now a cowl of living darkness, obscuring any definitive features. From this void, tendrils of smoky shadow drift upward, forming a silent, twisting crown. A single, ornate golden plate rests on his chest, glowing with a faint, imprisoned light…a symbol of regality and a chain all at once. In one gloved hand, an ancient, worn coin appears, which he begins to flip absently.

The transformation is silent and complete. THE DARK LORD now stands at the head of the table.

Gasps, the scrape of chairs, and the ring of weapons being half-drawn fill the chamber. Daviet is on his feet, a blade of crimson hatred manifesting in his hand. Lilith places a restraining hand on his arm, her eyes wide. The real Sel watches, her face a perfect mask, but her knuckles are white on the arms of her chair. Abyria simply stares, her starless eyes filled with a millennia of pain.

DARK LORD
(His voice is now a deep, resonant baritone, calm but filling the room)
Some of you wish to kill me where I stand. Others see a weapon. Save your energies. We have a common enemy that makes our divine squabbles look like children breaking toys in a sandbox.

He waves a hand. Above the table, a holographic map of the world materializes. Dozens of blazing red markers move with slow, relentless purpose, all converging on the Celestial City.

DARK LORD

The Titans. The Emotional Primordials. The Behemoths you buried. They are marching home. To the places of power they were torn from when you built your prison over their bones. They will kill every god, every mortal, every blade of grass. They will salt the earth with divine blood.

Another gesture. A shimmering, silver line erupts from the Heartwood, arcing across the continent to form a massive barrier in the Titans' path.

DARK LORD
This is not a wall. It is a funnel. A killing field of our choosing. We will stop them there. And we will do it… with her help.

He points to Abyria. She meets his gaze, the void in his cowl meeting the stars in her eyes.

LILITH
(Voice like frozen crystal)
Why should the Celestial Host bleed for your calamity, Lord of Lies? My legions can fortify the heavens. Let the earth-bound fight their war in the mud.

LANA
(Rising, her life-light flaring)
If your heavens were so impregnable, Mother, the Sky-Layer storm-wraiths would not be clawing at your gates even now! This is a tide! It drowns the high and the low alike!

DAVIET
(Slamming a fist, his blade flickering)
Let them come! I will forge their hatred into a sword! We don't need this council of weaklings and traitors!

DARK LORD
He slams his coin hand on the table. The sound is a deafening CRACK that shakes the very roots of the Tree. Daviet's blade snuffs out. The chamber falls utterly silent.

DARK LORD
Enough. Your fury is a snack for them. Your pride, an appetizer. This war demands a temporary peace. Sworn here, on the oldest life in existence. Swear it, or I step aside and let the Titans have their reunion. I will watch from the shadows.

He turns his shrouded head to Abyria.

DARK LORD
Now. You have a question, First Mother. Ask it.

Abyria stands. The room holds its breath.

ABYRIA
Why? Why did you put me in that place? Why did you take my husband from me, wear his skin, and live my life?

A profound silence. The Dark Lord is still. The coin stops flipping.

DARK LORD
I did not ‘take him over.’ I consumed him. His compassion, his love, his hope… they were flavors I had never tasted. Addictive. I wore his face to understand the recipe. To feel what he felt.

He takes a step closer to the table, his form seeming to drink the light.

DARK LORD
And know this: even as I pretended, he was not entirely gone. A stain on my soul. An echo. Every kind word I spoke to you through his lips, every gentle touch… that was him, fighting his way to the surface of me, trying to reach you. A ghost in the machine of me.

Abyria stares, tears of pure darkness streaming down her face. She slowly sinks back into her chair, shaking her head, overwhelmed.

ABYRIA
(Whispering)
That… is all.

DARK LORD
Then the Council is decided. Marshal your armies. The funnel will last for three days. Use them. Meeting adjourned.

Chairs scrape. The gathered powers begin to leave, casting fearful and hateful glances at the dark figure at the head of the table. Only DAVE remains, leaning on the table, watching the map.

The Dark Lord walks over to him.

DARK LORD
You. The ‘Voice.’ The ‘God King.’ Seriously? Look at you.

DAVE
(Sighs, not looking up)
What’s wrong with it? It’s a title. A job description.

DARK LORD
You’re a retired storyteller who got promoted to management. You’re out of shape for this kind of frontline brawl.

DAVE
(Smiling a weary, old smile)
I still have my strength. It's just… quieter now. Less flashy. More foundation than lightning bolt.

DARK LORD
Hmph. We'll see.

They stand side-by-side, the destroyer and the weary king, looking at the holographic map, at the slow, inevitable march toward the shimmering silver line.

DAVE
My Lord… will we win?

The Dark Lord flips his coin. It spins, glinting. He catches it, slaps it onto the back of his hand, but doesn't look at it.

DARK LORD
We have to wait and see. That's the terrible, wonderful secret of it all. Even for me.

(The camera floats up, through the canopy of the Tree of Life, into the sky. It pulls back, showing the entire planet. On its surface, the silver funnel shines, and the red dots converge. We pull further back, into the starry void.)

The perspective shifts, diving into a different kind of darkness…not the Dark Lord's, but something older, smoother, more predatory.

We see a silhouette of a woman, perfect and black. MELANIE.

MELANIE (V.O.)
(A razor whisper, intimate and deadly)
You made your move, old friend. Assembled your little board of gods and monsters. How nostalgic. The King, the Queen, the angry little prince… the broken family, the scheming sisters, the ancient machines. A lovely, messy painting. I hope you're ready for the first wave. Because when I strike… I don't miss. I paint in monochrome, too. But I only use black.

A chilling, beautiful laugh.

MELANIE (V.O.)
Goodbye, old friend. See you all soon.

EPISODE 6: THE TIDE AND THE BREAK

(COLD OPEN)

The screen flickers to life, but not with the cosmic vista of The Voice. Instead, we are in a stylish, unsettlingly normal-looking living room. It's cozy, with plush furniture, a crackling fire, and bookshelves lined with exotic titles. Sitting on a velvet couch, sipping tea from a fine china cup, is THE DARK LORD.

He looks directly at us, a faint, amused smile on his shadowed face.

DARK LORD
I will be narrating for now. Dave has… really let himself go since the last time I saw him in person. God-kinghood is not kind to the waistline, it seems. Now, follow me. The show must go on.

He sets his cup down with a soft clink and rises. He walks down a long, wood-paneled hallway lined with portraits…not of people, but of captured moments of profound despair and beautiful ruin. He opens a door at the end.

INT. DARK LORD'S OBSERVATORY - CONTINUOUS

The room is circular and domed. In the center, on a pedestal of obsidian, rests a massive, flawless DIAMOND CRYSTAL BALL. Inside it, galaxies swirl in miniature.

DARK LORD
My personal theater. Let's see if the players are taking their places for the final act. Are they getting ready for their battle? Their last stand? Their glorious, pointless sacrifice?

He places a hand on the crystal. It flares with inner light. He then dissolves into a stream of living shadow that wraps around the camera's perspective.

DARK LORD (V.O.)
Hold on. The commute is… unconventional.

(MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE - A dramatic, war-themed montage: armies gathering, faces of determination, the Titans' march, set to a powerful, urgent score.)

SCENE 1: THE CALM BEFORE

The shadow-stream surges through the diamond, and we are hurtling through a tunnel of stars and nebulae at impossible speed, before bursting out into the familiar space around the planet. We dive through the atmosphere, sweeping over ravaged landscapes…forests trampled by colossal footprints, towns silenced…until we pull up before the immense TREE OF LIFE.

The Dark Lord re-materializes, standing before the ancient trunk. He places a palm against the bark.

DARK LORD
Old friend. The gardener is back. Tell me… is the blight receding? Is the garden healing?

The ground trembles. Thick, luminous roots break the surface, not aggressively, but with a weary, ancient grace. They wrap around the Dark Lord's legs, his torso, finally forming a cocoon around his head. They are not binding him; they are connecting. Sap-light pulses through the vines into him, and from him into the Tree…a sharing of memory, of foresight.

A deep, resonant voice, the voice of the HEARTWOOD itself, echoes in the shared space.

HEARTWOOD (V.O.)
No. The sickness is in the soil. The roots taste only fear and coming blood. I do not know what will cleanse it. Perhaps nothing. Perhaps this is the final autumn. Now… go to your heroes. Their spring is brief.

The roots retract. The Dark Lord opens his eyes, a flicker of something like sorrow in their depths. He nods.

The camera peels away from him, soaring over the continent toward the massive, shimmering SILVER FUNNEL that cuts across the plains.

EXT. THE FUNNEL - FORTRESS LINES - DAY

We descend to the forward defensive line…a chaotic, sprawling encampment where the armies of gods, mortals, and forgotten realms have merged into a desperate coalition. The air hums with tension, magic, and the smell of forge-fire and fear.

We find our core group in a quieter corner. ANJALIN is sharpening a dagger made of crystallized blood. EDENBER the Ogre is polishing his time-watch with intense focus. JALEY the Elf is fletching arrows, her hands shaking. GNOMMEBLEY is tinkering with a complex, multi-barreled device. DARRENCE stares at the distant, dust-choked horizon where the Titans gather.

ANJALIN
(Without looking up)
All of this. This chaos, this… impending doom. It traces back to you, Darrence. To the night you ran into that diner, trailing death behind you like a cloak.

DARRENCE
(His voice is quiet, tired)
You think I wanted this? I was just a kid trying to help his parents on one last job. It went sideways. Everything since… has just been falling.

EDENBER
(Looking up, his rumble contemptuous)
Weak. You are a twig in a hurricane. I bet you couldn't even help them when it mattered. Just watched.

Darrence's jaw clenches. He looks at his fists, then at the massive Ogre. Rage, shame, and helplessness war within him. Instead of swinging, his form shimmers. He turns invisible and teleports away…a reflexive escape.

But he doesn't reappear in the camp. He materializes in a space of PURE, FEATURELESS WHITE. There is no ground, no sky, only serene, overwhelming light. He panics, disoriented.

SERAPHIM (V.O.)
(A voice of impossible gentleness, like a mother's lullaby and a cosmic chord)
Oh, poor, weary child. You have faced so much darkness. Carried such guilt. And yet… you still try to be kind. Even now. Why do you punish yourself so?

DARRENCE
(Looking around, bewildered)
Where… who are you? Why me? Why is all of this my fault?

SERAPHIM (V.O.)
Fault is a chain mortals forge for themselves. You were a stone that started an avalanche. The mountain was already unstable. Your journey ahead is steep, and the path is lined with thorns. But trust this: your spark, that stubborn ember of compassion they mock you for… it will one day shine brighter than any star in this or any heaven. Remember the light, Darrence. It is not outside of you. It is what you choose to protect.

A sense of profound peace washes over him, a warmth that seeps into his bones, steadying his trembling hands.

DARRENCE
Thank you.

He blinks. He is back at the edge of the training grounds, alone. The echo of the Seraphim's voice lingers: "Good luck."

He takes a deep breath, his expression shifting from lost to resolved. "I must get ready," he mutters to himself and turns to find a training dummy.

EDENBER
(Spotting him, calls out)
Yeah! Go get a workout, twig! You need it!

The others ignore the Ogre's jab. Darrence simply walks away, a new determination in his step.

SCENE 2: TRAINING & TEMPTATION

EXT. MAKESHIFT ARENA - LATER

Darrence is practicing his teleports, appearing and disappearing in a blur, when Anjalin walks into the ring.

DARRENCE
Why are you here? Come to remind me how weak I am?

ANJALIN
Because he's not completely wrong. You have power, but you fight like you're apologizing for it. With my help, you might learn to stop flinching. You might learn where true bravery hides..not in absence of fear, but in acting despite it.

DARRENCE
Harsh. But okay.

They move to opposite ends of the sandy arena.

ANJALIN
This is a test. No killing. Try to touch my shoulder. I will defend. Ready? Three… two… one…

Darrence vanishes. Anjalin closes her eyes, not with sight, but with other senses. She feels the heat displacement in the air, the subtle pressure change. Her right fist ignites in a wreath of fire and hovering blood.

He teleports behind her. She feels the nervous spike in his heartbeat a millisecond before he materializes. Without turning, she flicks a wrist. A tendril of her own blood, leaping from her knuckle, wraps around his ankle an instant before he can solidify fully, yanking him off balance. He stumbles, becoming visible.

She walks over, looking down at him.

ANJALIN
Where is your swiftness? Your stealth? You were a thief. Thieves are decisive. You are hesitant. Again.

They reset. This time, Anjalin attacks first, sending a rolling wave of fire across the sand. Darrence turns invisible and runs toward the flame. At the last second, he teleports…reappearing behind her again. But the defensive blood-magic is already there, a crimson net that catches him mid-lunge.

ANJALIN
Better. But predictable. You go for the back. Again.

The third round, Darrence changes tactics. He doesn't attack. He becomes a ghost. He teleports in a rapid, staccato sequence: left, right, above, behind, ten feet away…a dizzying, invisible barrage of movement designed to overwhelm her senses. Anjalin stands still in the center, eyes shut tight.

A vein throbs on her forehead. She can't lock onto his nervous system; he's moving too fast, his emotions a blur.

So she stops trying to find him. She stomps her foot. A circular wall of intertwined fire and erupting blood geysers from the sand around her, twelve feet high, a roaring, snapping barrier.

Darrence, on his next teleport, materializes inside the ring with her, his momentum carrying him forward. The moment he is fully real, her power seizes him…not from sensing his heart, but from the blood in his own body. She hurls him across the arena with a grunt of effort. He slams into a barrier of stacked sandbags, the wind knocked out of him.

Anjalin walks over, the wall of fire and blood collapsing behind her. She looks down at him, then offers a hand.

ANJALIN
You have immense potential. Speed, unpredictability, a power that defies physics. But will you find the strength to wield it? Or will you keep letting it wield you?

He takes her hand, and she pulls him up.

DARRENCE
(Wheezing, but smiling)
That was… actually fun. Thank you, Anjalin.

He walks off, dusting himself. As he leaves, the shadows at the edge of the training ground deepen. From Darrence's own retreating shadow, a figure peels itself free. THE DARK LORD steps into the light, now in his true, majestic-terrifying form.

DARK LORD
Hello, Anjalin of the Blood and Flame. The most famous sorceress of your age. It is amusing, is it not? Your father was to be the last great Hemomancer. And then you were born. Something new. Something… uniquely dangerous.

With a wave of his hand, a small, elegant table and two chairs manifest, along with a steaming pot of tea. The tea in his cup looks like a liquid shadow.

DARK LORD
Sit. Please.

Cautiously, she sits. He pours for both of them.

DARK LORD
I have watched your progress. Every tragedy, every spark of rage, every time you twist your grief into a new, more devastating technique. You do not use your power for 'good' or 'evil.' You use it for survival. And for memory. Tell me I'm wrong.

ANJALIN
My brother… Koji… he would want me to be a hero. But these people, this world…they don't deserve heroes. They deserve the fire. But being a villain… that would make a mockery of how he died. Of his light.

DARK LORD
Precisely. The Sister of Fate spins a cruel thread. You are locked between absolutes. A most uncomfortable prison. Now… tell me. What does Anjalin want? Not the sister, not the avenger. You.

He leans forward. The darkness of his cowl seems to deepen. Twin streams of pure shadow pour from his eyes, not threateningly, but like tendrils of inquiry. They touch her temples. It's not an invasion; it's an invitation to utter truth.

Under this influence, her defenses fall. Her voice is a raw whisper.

ANJALIN
I want to be powerful enough that no one can ever take anything from me again. I want to be the storm, not the tree that breaks in it. I want to need…no one.

The Dark Lord leans back, the shadow-tendrils retracting. A slow smile spreads.

DARK LORD
A worthy desire. Autonomy. Supreme strength. I can grant you the path to it. Not a gift, but a key. It will take time. It will require… sacrifice. Of your comfort. Of your remaining humanity.

ANJALIN
(Her eyes blazing with fierce longing)
I don't care what it takes. Yes.

She extends her hand across the table. He takes it. His grip is cold. From his palm, a stream of dark fire…not hellfire, but something older, a flame that consumes light…flows into her arm. She gasps, not in pain, but in shocking, electrifying fullness. It feels like a missing piece slotting into her soul. She sees a flash: herself, not just wielding fire and blood, but being a being of incandescent shadow and crimson power, terrifying and free.

The connection breaks. She stares at her hand, where a faint, twisting black mark, like a burned tattoo, briefly glows before fading beneath her skin.

DARK LORD
We have an accord. We will speak again, when the battle is done. For now… wear your new potential lightly.

He stands, the furniture dissolving into smoke, and strides toward the main fortress.

INT. FORTRESS - BARRACKS - LATER

Darrence sits alone on a cot in a dim room, head in his hands. The shadow under his cot stretches, and the Dark Lord steps out of it.

DARK LORD
The boy who watched his world die. Who feels the weight of every subsequent death on his shoulders. Why are you here, in this… place?

He says ‘place’ with utter disdain, as if the entire fortress is a hovel.

DARRENCE
(Ignoring the tone, voice hollow)
I need a break. From pretending. The act of being the hopeful one, the kind one, swallowing every ounce of anger when people like Edenber, when the whole world, deserves to feel a fraction of my rage. But I don’t. I can’t.

DARK LORD
(Looks at him with genuine, cold fascination)
Ah. The tyranny of a pure heart. How it tortures you. I could tell you a story. Of a variant of myself I consumed eons ago. He walked a path so similar to yours…kindness in a cruel universe, until the universe broke him in the most exquisite way. Or… I could tell you what your parents were truly after in that vault. Not just a relic. A secret about you.

Darrence’s head snaps up, eyes wide. “What?”

But the Dark Lord glances at a non-existent watch on his wrist.

DARK LORD
Ah. Time’s up. The curtain rises. Go. Join the others. It seems the opening act is beginning.

Before Darrence can utter another word, the Dark Lord is gone, leaving only a wisp of cold shadow. A distant, earth-shaking ROAR echoes through the fortress walls. Darrence bolts to his feet and runs outside.

SCENE 3: THE BATTLE BEGINS

EXT. THE FUNNEL - BATTLEFIELD - DAY

The allied forces are arrayed behind magical barriers and physical ramparts. Across the plain, the TITAN HORDE advances. It is not an army; it is a natural disaster made flesh. Behemoths of stone and sorrow, winged terrors of crystalline anger, amorphous blobs of primal fear.

On the rampart, the teams are making final preparations. Edenber sidles up to SELENA, the Goddess of War, who is checking the edge of her colossal axe.

EDENBER
(Winking)
Big fight. You need a big partner. I stop time. Very useful.

SELENA
(Without looking up)

You’re not my type. I prefer partners who don’t smell of damp cave and regret. Now move. You’re blocking my light.

Edenber’s face falls. The nearby Gnomeblely, Jaley, and even a few soldiers snicker.

Anjalin, Darrence, and their group converge. Gnomeblely rummages in his pack.

GNOMEBLELY
For morale! A pre-battle tradition! The Bloodsnatch!

He holds up red, crystalline candies wrapped in what looks like sugary bacon.

JALEY
(Taking one hesitantly)
What’s in it?

GNOMEBLELY
Sugar! Courage! And a proprietary blend of Fire-Layer spices! Guaranteed to make your blood sing!

They each take one. Darrence chews his. It’s sweet, then fiercely hot, then filling him with a warm, buzzing energy.

DARRENCE
(Looking at the ragtag group)
Whatever happens out there…we came from different worlds. But we’re here together now. That has to mean something.

Above them, the air distorts. THE DARK LORD floats, framed against the bleak sky, his form casting a long, cold shadow over the troops.

DARK LORD
(His voice amplifies, reaching every ear)
You will die today. Many of you. This is not a promise, nor a threat. It is arithmetic. This is war. Its only purpose is to keep the land behind you safe for one more day. So… make your deaths count.

He raises a hand, then sweeps it down.

DARK LORD
CHARGE!

A cacophonous roar erupts from the allied lines as they surge forward. The Titan horde answers with earth-shattering bellows, and the two forces collide in the middle of the silver-lit funnel. The battle is chaos incarnate.

BATTLE MONTAGE - INTERCUTTING HEROES:

1. Anqounet & SEL: The Goddess of Death and the Queen of Knowledge move in synchronicity. Anqounet summons waves of soul-chilling entropy that slow a Titan of Rage, making its movements sluggish. Sel analyzes the patterns in its crystalline hide, pinpointing a hairline fracture. Together, they channel their power…black death and silver knowledge…into a single, piercing beam that blows a clean, sizzling hole through the Titan's chest. It stumbles, its rage extinguished, and falls.

2. SCARLET: The diplomat takes to the air on wings of magical energy. She flies straight at a bat-like Terror of the Sky Layer. She weaves through its sonic screams, then hurls a condensed orb of pure diplomatic magic…a energy that seeks compromise and fails, thus exploding in a shockwave of concussive force. It shreds one wing. The creature spirals down. Scarlet doesn't watch it crash. She telekinetically lifts a half-buried megalith and brings it down on the creature's head with a sickening crunch.

3. GNOMMEBLEY & EDENBER: The gnome rides on the ogre's shoulders like a jockey. "Left! Left! Big one with the rocky knees!" Edenber charges a Titan whose legs are pillars of sedimentary rock. Gnomeblely leaps off, his tool-belt deploying grapples, and scrambles up the Titan's back like a squirrel. Edenber roars, holding up his watch. He tries to focus: Stop its right foot, at the peak of its step! But in his panic, he mumbles, "Stop… everything?" The watch glows, but the effect is a localized, wobbly time-bubble that slows the Titan's moss-growth and a few flying insects, but not the Titan itself. Cursing, Edenber draws a massive sword and axe and begins hacking at the creature's ankle. The Titan stumbles, swings a backhand, and sends Edenber flying through a copse of trees, which snap like twigs.

4. JALEY: From a vantage point, she fires arrow after arrow at the same Titan. Her unluckiness manifests. One arrow ricochets off a horn and nearly impales Gnomeblely, who yelps and dodges. Another causes a small rock slide that trips up a different, friendly ogre. But a third, by sheer accident, flies into the Titan's nostril, causing it to sneeze violently and lose its balance.

5. GNOMMEBLEY'S FINALE: From the Titan's spine, Gnomeblely plants his "magic bomb"...a device that vibrates at a frequency to shatter stone. He jumps, deploying a small, spring-loaded parachute. "Fire in the hole!" The explosion isn't fiery; it's a percussive THOOM that turns the Titan's upper spine into gravel. The monster collapses. Gnomeblely's parachute lands him neatly on the saddle of DAVIET, the God of Hatred, who is riding a snarling, fiery war-horse, cutting down smaller monsters with glee.

DAVIET
Nice firework, small-one!

They share a savage grin. But their triumph is short-lived. A winged Titan, a “Grief-Harrow,” they didn’t see swoops down. Its cavernous maw opens. Daviet tries to wheel his horse, but it’s too fast. The maw closes around the horse, rider, and gnome in one horrifying bite, and the creature banks back into the smoky sky.

SCENE 4: THE KINGS & THE TITAN KING

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - HIGH GROUND

On a ridgeline overlooking the carnage, VARNOK, the King of Titans, watches. His expression is one of deep, patient satisfaction. The shadows beside him coalesce into the DARK LORD.

DARK LORD
Varnok. You finally clawed your way out of the deep dark. And you come straight for the old neighborhood. Sentimental. Why not conquer the other realms first? Consolidate your power? Ensure no allies come to their aid?

VARNOK
(His voice is the sound of grinding continents)
Why let them watch from safety? I want them to see me burn everything they love. I want their hope to die before they do. Then… the other realms will fall like rotten fruit.

As if on cue, the sky hums. PRIME 9906, STAN, and a squadron of advanced war-bots streak into the battle, firing precise energy beams and missiles into the flying Titans. Their efficiency is stunning, turning the tide in a localized area.

DARK LORD
(Gesturing to the robots)
They seem to be spoiling your party.

VARNOK
(Watching, a gnarled smile on his stony face)
Let them think they are winning. Let them feel that fragile hope. It makes the crushing sweeter.

The Dark Lord follows his gaze. Across the battlefield, the allied forces, spurred by the robots’ arrival and their own small victories, are pushing forward. They’ve felled a significant number of Titans. A ragged cheer starts to rise.

Then Varnok lifts his massive, clawed hand. He closes it into a fist.

A deep, subsonic PULSE radiates from him, shaking the ground. From the edges of the funnel, from hidden burrows, from tears in the sky itself, a SECOND WAVE of Titans erupts. This wave is larger, fresher, more horrifying. They pour into the battlefield, surrounding the allied forces.

CLOSE ON: DARRENCE. He is fighting a clawed beast when the ground erupts in front of him. A worm-like Titan, a “Burrower of Despair,” surges up, its circular maw lined with teeth aiming to swallow him whole. He freezes, teleportation failing him in his shock.

A blur of crimson and shadow shoves him aside. ANJALIN plants herself between him and the maw. She doesn’t scream a spell. She gives a guttural roar of pure defiance and thrusts both hands forward. A concentrated sphere of superheated blood and black-tinged fire forms in an instant and fires point-blank into the Titan’s mouth. The explosion is internal. The creature’s body bulges, then ruptures from within, showering them in gore and fading shadow-stuff.

She turns to Darrence, panting, the new black mark on her arm glowing faintly. “Don’t just stand there!”

SCENE 5: DIVINE INTERVENTION & DARK RETRIBUTION

Varnok, seeing the tide turn again, begins his own advance. He is a moving mountain of destruction, heading straight for the command group where SEALVENA and her sisters are rallying troops.

But LILITH, the Goddess-Queen, steps in his path. Her radiance is formidable.

LILITH
You will not touch my daughters!

She creates a towering shield of solidified light. Varnok slams into it. The shield holds, but cracks spider-web across its surface. SELENA, SCARLET, and SEALVENA add their power…war-magic, diplomatic binding, diamond-hard will…reinforcing the shield.

DAVE, the God-King, appears in a flash of light. He doesn’t use complex magic. He puts all his “foundation” strength into an uppercut that actually lifts Varnok’s massive chin, snapping his head back.

DAVE
You picked the wrong family to mess with!

Varnok stumbles back a step, more surprised than hurt. He looks at the glowing sword Lilith now holds, a blade of pure divine authority. She drives it into his chest with a cry. It sticks there, humming.

Varnok looks down at the hilt protruding from his stone-like flesh. He laughs, a sound like avalanches. He grabs the blade and snaps it off, leaving the tip embedded.

VARNOK

Your family dies today.

He charges. The four women combine their powers, a dazzling display of light and magic that actually halts his charge, creating a grinding stalemate. With his free hand, Varnok whips one of the broken chains still dangling from his wrist. It snakes out with impossible speed, wraps around Dave's torso, and yanks him off his feet. Varnok uses the God-King as a living flail, swinging him brutally into Lilith, then the Diamond Sisters, breaking their concentration and sending them sprawling.

He roars in triumph, and a fresh wave of smaller Titans swarms over the downed gods.

HIGH ABOVE THE BATTLEFIELD:

The Dark Lord watches Varnok's triumph, then turns his gaze upward. The fabric of reality tears with a sound like ripping silk. Two figures fly out.

NICK and SAM. They are clad in sleek, modern combat gear that seems both technological and magical. They look like interdimensional special forces. They see the Dark Lord and approach, confusion and concern on their faces.

NICK
Whoa. Ash? What the hell happened to you, man? Why do you look like… that?

SAM
(This is a different kind of concern…tactical)
Your energy signature is completely different. What caused the regression to this form?

DARK LORD
(His voice is cold, devoid of any recognition)
I am not the 'Ash' you knew. That man is dead. Consumed. And this time, my dearest old friends… you will have to fall.

SAM
We don't want to fight you, Ash! We're here to help!

DARK LORD
You took everything from me! My universe! My peace! You left me with nothing but the void! Now I will rise from the ashes of this one. Not today. But when this body dies, I will rise like the phoenix!

He throws his arms wide. From the swirling energies of the battle below, two phoenixes manifest…one of annihilating darkness, one of blinding, painful light. They circle him once, twice, then shriek and merge. Their fusion creates a nightmarish, four-horned WINGED DEVIL, a creature of pure, balanced annihilation, which lets out a silent scream.

DARK LORD
I am the living embodiment of consequence! Now…time to fall!

Nick curses and flies at him, a brawler. He throws powdered grenades…one explodes in flash, another releases entangling nets of light. One pouch hits the Dark Lord's face, releasing a cloud of blinding glitter. Nick smirks, following up with a series of supernaturally fast punches to the torso.

NICK
Still fight dirty, huh Ash?!

As Nick winds up for a punch to the face, the Dark Lord's hand snaps up and catches his fist. The glitter falls away from unreadable darkness.

DARK LORD
You think a parlor trick from the Quantum Bazaar would work on me? How quaint.

He yanks Nick off balance and hurls him like a missile toward the ground, where he creates a small crater.

The Dark Lord turns to Sam, who is charging a glowing energy-rifle. He doesn't move. He simply gestures with his free hand. His scythe-cane, which had been floating beside him, vanishes and reappears behind Sam, spinning like a buzzsaw. It passes clean through her waist.

SAM
(Gasping, looking down)
You… missed…

DARK LORD
Did I?

The scythe completes its orbit and returns to his hand. Sam's top half slides from her bottom half. The Dark Lord floats down, catches his upper torso before it falls. He looks into his dying, shocked eyes.

DARK LORD
See you when you reconstitute. Tell the Council it will be a while.

He dissolves into glowing atoms. Nick, struggling from his crater, sees this and screams in rage. He rockets upward, a fist pulled back for a planet-cracking blow.

The Dark Lord catches the fist again. “Predictable.” His scythe flashes twice. Nick’s hands are severed at the wrists. He stares, stunned. The Dark Lord places his palms on either side of Nick’s head.

DARK LORD
Tell Melanie she needs to send a real challenge next time. Not relics of a friendship I erased.

He squeezes. Nick’s head comes apart not in gore, but in a dissipating cloud of stardust and memory, fading into nothingness.

SCENE 6: THE END OF THE BATTLE

The Dark Lord floats high, looking down at the raging battle. The allies are being overwhelmed by the second wave. Varnok is unstoppable. In his mind, a wave of profound, cosmic boredom and melancholy washes over him.

DARK LORD (V.O.)
I don’t feel like fighting today.

He raises a hand. A wave of absolute, silent power washes out from him across the entire battlefield. Every Titan, every monster, freezes. Then, they are ripped from their positions, shrinking, compressing, and streaming across the sky into a small, dark vortex that opens beside him…a portal to his private collection.

In seconds, the battlefield is empty of enemies. Only the panting, bleeding, confused allies remain, standing amidst the ruins and their dead.

The Dark Lord descends, his form shifting back to its more refined, regal darkness. He addresses the stunned survivors, his voice carrying without effort.

DARK LORD
You have done… adequately. The immediate threat is contained. Mourn your losses. Celebrate your fleeting victory. Tend to your wounded. We will speak of what comes next… later.

He offers no more. He turns and flies towards the Tree of Life, leaving a silent army in his wake.

EXT. TREE OF LIFE - TWILIGHT

The Dark Lord lands before the ancient trunk.

HEARTWOOD (V.O.)
You stopped the battle, but not the war. Death for this universe is still upon us. You know who you must speak to. The one who walks between the stitches of reality. The Gardener of Ends.

DARK LORD
I do not need their help. Their price is always too high.

HEARTWOOD
I am merely telling you what the roots showed me. The path is there. The choice is yours. Now… I must rest. This day has drained the seasons from me.

DARK LORD
Farewell, old friend. I will… consider it.

He dissolves into shadows.

INT. DARK LORD'S POCKET DIMENSION - TROPHY ROOM

He reappears in a vast, silent hall that stretches into infinity. On pedestals are thousands of GLASS SPHERES. Inside each is a miniature, perfect, living world. In one, a god rules over a tiny civilization, unaware he is in a display case. In another, an entire galaxy swirls, its light muted by the glass. He walks to a new, empty pedestal. From his palm, he releases the captured essence of the Titan horde. It forms into a new sphere…a tiny, storm-wracked landscape where miniature Titans rage eternally against an invisible barrier.

DARK LORD
You will stay here, with all the others. Entertain me when I am bored.

He walks to an adjoining, cozy library and sinks into a high-backed chair. A book floats into his hands: "The Evil Queen Rises." He sips his shadow-tea.

DARK LORD
(To the camera)
Oh yes. You have seen so much today. Blood, bravery, betrayal, and my own… petty interventions. Go now. Process it. Digest the horror and the hope. Remember, it's all just shades of the same color.

He takes a slow sip, his eyes on the page.

DARK LORD
Goodbye. See you all soon.

(The camera holds on his face as he reads. Then, the image is PULLED BACKWARDS, out of the pocket dimension, through layers of void, until we are in a place of PURE, ABSOLUTE DARKNESS.)

We are in a long, stark hallway. The camera floats down it. At the end is a throne room. On a throne that seems made of condensed nothingness sits MELANIE. Her form is pure, sleek black

silhouette. Arrayed before her are five elite soldiers, each a silhouette of a different, deadly shape…the sharp angles of an assassin, the hulking form of a juggernaut, the lithe shape of a hunter.

MELANIE
(Her voice is the sound of a door closing forever)
It's time. The board is set. The players are wounded and weary. Go. Clean the board. No prisoners. No mercy. Only silence.

The five silhouettes bow in unison and vanish into streaks of blackness, heading in different directions.

The camera slowly turns back to Melanie. As it does, a creeping, liquid darkness begins to rise from the bottom of the frame, consuming the image.

MELANIE
(As the darkness covers the lens, her final, chilling laugh is all that remains)
Goodbye, old friend.

THE LAUGHTER IS CUT OFF AS THE DARKNESS COMPLETELY FILLS THE SCREEN.

SEASON 2

EPISODE 1: WEDDING DAY

(COLD OPEN)

Absolute darkness. Then, the familiar, oppressive geometry of MELANIE'S CASTLE materializes. We float down the light-swallowing hallway toward the throne room.

INT. MELANIE'S THRONE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

On her throne of void sits MELANIE. Her five ELITE SOLDIERS stand at attention…silhouettes of blade, shadow, sinew, plague, and stone. With a slight nod from her, they turn and melt into the surrounding darkness, departing on their missions.

Alone, Melanie's head tilts. She looks directly at us.

MELANIE
(Velvet-edged razor)
Oh. Still here? Like a persistent stain on the lens of reality.

She extends a hand. Tendrils of living darkness lash out, snatching the camera's perspective, pulling us inches from her featureless face.

MELANIE
Let's be formal. Why are you in my house? To see the beginning? The infection point?

She leans back, steepling her fingers.

MELANIE
My darkness is already in the water supply of that little world. In its dreams, its regrets, its secret shames. Soon, the veil will not tear…it will dissolve. And it will be far, far too late. Now… off you go. Back to the dress-up party.

With a contemptuous flick, she hurls us backward. We crash through the fabric of reality…a sound of shattering crystal. As we are expelled back into the normal cosmos, the closing rift gives us a final glimpse: Melanie, pointing, her form shaking with silent, merciless laughter.

The rift seals.

(MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE - SEASON 2. A new, ominous theme. Visuals recap the titan war, the Dark Lord's triumph, and end with a slow push-in on Melanie's laughing silhouette.)

SCENE 1: A FAMILY BREAKFAST IN THE POCKET DIMENSION

INT. DARK LORD'S POCKET DIMENSION - KITCHEN - DAY

A space of impossible comfort and curated beauty. The room is a warm, modern kitchen, but through the window lies not a backyard, but a breathtaking, silent vista of nebulae and floating, geometric gardens…a universe he built for himself.

THE DARK LORD wears a simple black apron over dark, tailored trousers and a shirt. He stirs a fragrant, complex stew that seems to contain shifting constellations of spice.

At the marble island sit STAN and PRIME 9906. A third perch holds a bowl of oil-soaked clockwork components.

PRIME 9906
(Calm, analytical)
Your return parameters were unexpected, Father. The post-war equilibrium was still calculating. Your intervention suggests a pre-placed variable.

DARK LORD
(Stirring)
Some gardens need a frost, 9906, to kill the weak roots and strengthen the survivors. That ‘war’ was a seasonal change. Now, report. How fares the floating kingdom of logic?

PRIME 9906
Operational efficiency has dropped to 96.2%. The Celestial Kingdom’s grief over Daviet is morphing into aggression. They blame my ‘soulless neutrality.’ I am activating the Golem-Titan legions. A god-war looms.

DARK LORD
(Ladling stew into bowls)
Gods are such sore losers. Good luck with that, son.

A soft whirr. A sleek robotic OWL with prismatic-optic eyes flies in. It lands, transforming in a cascade of light particles into a living, wise-looking barn owl.

OWL (KORVUS)
(Dry, synthesized whisper)
The Five are deployed. Trajectories: indeterminate. Primary target probability matrix inconclusive, but high correlation to your known assets.

DARK LORD
(Scratches Korvus's head)
Thank you, my watchful child.

He turns to Stan.

STAN
The Vault is secure. The Kilbers are… eager. They smell the thinning of the walls. They wish to hunt.

DARK LORD
(Smiling with paternal warmth)
My sons. One of infinite calculation, one of ancient duty. You've done well. It pleases me.

PRIME 9906
You are attending the matrimonial event? The union of Anubis and Sealvena. It is a significant political consolidation.

DARK LORD
I am. A father sees his son wed. Even a son from a… borrowed lineage. You'll both be in the background, yes?

STAN
We will observe from the designated perimeter. With you.

KORVUS
(Hoots affirmation)

DARK LORD
I must go smooth some ancient, divine feathers first. Visit Abyria.

PRIME 9906
(Optics flicker)
A high-risk socialization. Her hatred for you is constant. A thermodynamic certainty.

DARK LORD
Family therapy, 9906. Now, eat. While I'm gone, you three are the guardians of my little pocket of peace. Keep it quiet.

They eat in comfortable silence. Finished, the Dark Lord removes his apron. It dissolves into motes of dark light.

DARK LORD
See you at the altar. Don't be late. My reputation for punctuality is terrible enough.

He vanishes into shimmering air.

SCENE 2: THE KINGDOM OF DUAT

EXT. DUAT - THE SHORELINE - DAY

He materializes on a stark shore. To the left: a vibrant, surreal landscape of crystal forests and light-rivers (Life). To the right: a beautiful, silent waste of polished black stone (Peaceful Death). In between, a mercury-sea. Upon it floats a gothic castle on a stone barge, bridges to both shores.

DARK LORD
(To himself)
Duat. My children kept the shores separate. Clean. Philosophical. This variant chose… family mixing. Sentimental. And now they're at war with the rest of the pantheon. The drama is delicious.

From the right shore, SEL emerges from the mists, elegant in dark formal wear. Beside her, holding her hand, is ANQOUNET, the Goddess of Death, her pale beauty severe and striking. They cross the bridge.

SEL
My Lord. We heard you might come.

ANQOUNET
(Nodding respectfully)
Father.

DARK LORD
Sel. Anqounet. A social call. To offer congratulations to my son, and a gift to the happy couple.

SEL
Then follow us. He's drowning in fabric samples.

They lead him across the bridge to the Death-shore, entering the castle through the great maw of a fossilized leviathan skull, descending into the warm cavern below.

INT. DUAT - UNDERHALL - DAY

A lively, tapestry-lined cavern. ANUBIS stands flustered before a rack of extravagant suits. LANA critiques embroidery. NECRO nods. ABYRIA watches, her starless eyes filled with sad love.

Sel and Anqounet join the group. The Dark Lord descends the last steps. Silence falls.

DARK LORD
(Warmly)
Family. Anubis. Congratulations.

He clasps Anubis's shoulder. The god manages a smile.

ANUBIS
Thank you, Father. Will you stay?

DARK LORD
I have a gift for your union. Patience.

He nods to the others, then moves to Abyria's isolated chair. He sits beside her. The family politely resumes their debate.

ABYRIA
(Whispering, venomous)
Why are you here, thief? This is for the family. Not the creature who wears its skin.

DARK LORD
(Leaning close, intimate)
The man I consumed…your husband…wants to see his son married. He saw Lana's and Anqounet's wedding. He is part of me, Abyria. A ghost in the machine. Sometimes I let him have the wheel for a moment, just to feel the sun. A father's kindness.

Abyria's breath catches. A tear of pure darkness falls.

ABYRIA
You lie. You wear his face in your closet of masks.

DARK LORD
Perhaps. But look. The suit with the gold scarabs. He'd love that. The one with the cracks of light… that's your taste. A blend. For our son.

He speaks louder.

DARK LORD
The scarabs are timeless. But the cracked gold…there's poetry in that. Broken light.

ANQOUNET
I prefer the cracks. They speak of something shattered and remade. Stronger.

SEL
(Examining another)
The one with the smoke pattern. For the god of transitions, mystery is an asset.

LANA
Why not both? Smoke pouring from the cracks?

NECRO
(Nodding)
And his lotus… petals of polished jet, with gilded veins.

DARK LORD
A splendid synthesis. Anubis?

Anubis looks overwhelmed. “I… only have these.”

The Dark Lord stands. He looks at Abyria. A silent question. After a tense moment, she gives the faintest nod. They both raise a hand.

Their powers merge…cosmic creation and death-born artistry. The suits glow, melt, and reform into one magnificent garment: black as the space between stars, with hairline cracks leaking luminous gold ‘smoke,’ scarabs of obsidian climbing one lapel.

Anubis stares, then smiles with true joy. He hurries to change. When he returns, the family gasps. He is perfect.

DARK LORD
(Voice thick)
He would be proud.

He turns before the emotion can settle. “We will see you at the altar.” He vanishes.

SCENE 3: MIRRORS & OLD FRIENDS

EXT. MORTO - ZOI’S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

The Dark Lord appears in the silent street. He turns to shadow and slips beneath Zoi’s door.

INT. ZOI’S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

ZOI kneels before her mirror. The reflection does not show her room, but another place entirely: PRIME HELL

The image is stark and brutal. The sky is a perpetual bruise of orange and black. The ground is cracked basalt, with rivers of molten brass flowing between towers of welded sin and sorrow. Souls move in endless, tortured processions. In the distance, mountains weep ash.

On a throne of interlocked, damned kings sits LILITH, THE QUEEN OF HELL, SIN OF LUST She is not merely beautiful; her beauty is a weapon, a trap, an age-old punishment. She wears a gown of living shadow and ember, her crown made of frozen sighs. Her eyes hold the patience of eternal damnation.

ZOI
…the binding is ready, your Majesty. Her diamond heart is under immense pressure. The fracture is imminent.

DARK LORD
(Appearing behind Zoi)
Zoi, darling, do you mind? I need to have a word with my oldest and dearest friend.

He snaps his fingers. Zoi vanishes with a yelp.

He steps before the mirror. The reflection of Hell frames him. He and Lilith share a look that spans eons…a history of shared triumphs, bitter rivalries, and a deep, unshakable bond forged in the primordial dark.

DARK LORD
Lilith. To what do I owe the visual intrusion? Checking if my pocket dimension has better decor?

LILITH
(Her voice is smoke, honey, and the crack of a whip)
Greed. Always so defensive. I'm merely talent-scouting. That upstart goddess who took my name… her spirit is under such delicious strain. When it snaps, I want the shards for my collection. She'd make an exquisite Archduchess of Anguish.

DARK LORD
Poaching from my backyard? That's almost rude. But for you, I'll allow it.

LILITH
Don't play the fool with me, old friend. I see your pieces on the board. You're not fortifying that toy world. You're building a dam. Against her. The Absolute Dark. And you're conscripting an army from the rubble.

DARK LORD
(Grins, a flash of something ancient and cold in his smile)
You always did see the whole board, Lust. But a master doesn't reveal his gambit. Now, I have a wedding to attend. As a guest, not a disruption. I'm feeling… paternal.

LILITH
Give the happy couple my most sincere regards. And try not to covet the wedding gifts. I know your nature.

DARK LORD
(Laughs, a genuine, rich sound)
Only if they're truly one-of-a-kind. My regards to Satan. Tell the old Wrath I still owe him a drink.

LILITH
Until the void between stars collapses, Greed.

DARK LORD
Until then, your Majesty.

The mirror's surface shivers and clears, showing only the Dark Lord's reflection in Zoi's room. Zoi reappears, flustered.

ZOI
That was profoundly invasive!

DARK LORD
More invasive than breaking a deal and keeping a soul hostage? Where is it, Zoi?

Zoi's defiance wavers. "A soul for a soul. That is the law. She offered nothing."

DARK LORD
The law. You are Necro's child, bound to endings. But your mother's lineage… what is it, Zoi? A whisper of memory? A ghost of what could have been? You stand at the crossroads. Will you be a warden of the old balance, or will you become the architect of a new one?

He leans in, his voice dropping to a vibration that feels like a tectonic shift.

DARK LORD
The old world is ending. New things are stirring in the silence I cultivate. Choose what you will be, before the tide of what's coming decides for you and washes away everything you thought you were.

He vanishes. Zoi is left alone, staring at her reflection, one hand pressed to her chest as if trying to quiet a second, phantom heartbeat.

SCENE 4: THE WEDDING

EXT. PAVILION OF CONCORD - DAY

A stunning pavilion in a neutral valley. Guests from all realms arrive: gods, mechs, elementals, freed monsters. The air is tense but hopeful.

Stan and Prime 9906 arrive via a subtle teleport disc. The Dark Lord materializes behind them, now in a magnificent, tailored black coat that seemed woven from galactic dust and void, a high collar framing his face. Dark, opaque sunglasses hide his eyes. He is an elegant and restrained power incarnate.

PRIME 9906
(Sensors tracking him)
Allowing the variant consciousness such prominence is a tactical vulnerability.

DARK LORD
Today isn't about tactics. It's about legacy. He deserves his father here. I am many things, but I am not without sentiment. There's a difference, largely aesthetic.

STAN
It is an emotionally coherent action. It is… acceptable.

They take seats at a rear table. ITEMS, God of Commerce, waves. Korvus, in a tiny silver vest, hoots.

The ceremony begins. SEALVENA walks the aisle in a gown of diamond dust and captured moonlight, borne by songbirds. She meets ANUBIS at the altar.

A multi-faith PRIEST speaks. The vows are simple, cutting through the political tension.

ANUBIS
Sealvena, for eight years, we met in secret…a god of endings and a queen of war, finding peace in each other. Today, I choose you in the light.

SEALVENA
Anubis, you were my sanctuary in a world of strategy and hardness. Wherever the path leads, into conflict or calm, I walk with you.

They kiss. Applause swells, genuine and warm.

SCENE 5: THE RECEPTION & THE WAITING SHADOWS

INT. PAVILION - GRAND BALLROOM - NIGHT

A surreal, joyful reception. Gods dance with robots. Sel and Anqounet share a slow, intimate dance. The Diamond Sisters are present, Selena drinking, Scarlet observing. Anjalin allows

Darrence one stiff dance. Edenber is rebuffed by Selena again. Jaley talks to a fascinated tech-bot.

The Dark Lord moves through the crowd, a respectful space around him. He approaches the newlyweds, offering a small black box.

DARK LORD
For your home. A shard of the silence between heartbeats. To remind you that peace is not the absence of noise, but the choice to listen to the quiet together.

He doesn't stay. He moves to a dark balcony overlooking the gardens. He turns to us.

DARK LORD
(To the camera)
A beautiful pause. A moment of light. Remember it. It makes the coming darkness taste all the more bitter.

He turns, opens a door that wasn't there…a rectangle of silent, deep-space black. He steps through into his pocket dimension, and it vanishes.

(The camera stays. It pulls back, up into the night sky, looking down on the glowing pavilion.)

We see the joy, the fragile peace.

Then, the view shifts…to thermal, to magical sight. In the deepest garden shadows, under the eaves, within the darkness cast by the lights… five shapes hold perfectly still. MELANIE'S ELITES. Observing. Cataloging. A sheathed blade.

BOOM. Fireworks ignite above. Gold, diamond, emerald blooms shower light, illuminating the joyful faces below.

For one brilliant second, the light washes over the garden, revealing the five hidden figures.

They do not move. Their featureless faces tilt up, catching the colors before the light fades, plunging them back into perfect, patient darkness.

FINAL SHOT: The last firework fades. The screen holds on the dark sky over the joyful, oblivious celebration.

FADE TO BLACK.

SEASON 2, EPISODE 2: FEAR CAN EVEN STRIKE THE BRAVEST OF WARRIORS

(COLD OPEN)

The camera gazes at the night sky above the wedding pavilion. The last embers of fireworks have faded, leaving only cold starlight. Slowly, it tilts down.

EXT. PAVILION GROUNDS - NIGHT

The celebration is over. Carriages, teleportation circles, and winged mounts carry the guests away into the darkness. Laughter fades, replaced by the lonely rustle of wind through discarded decorations.

We zoom past the departing crowds, past a lingering Sel and Anqounet sharing a quiet moment, past Prime 9906 and Stan vanishing in a flash of light. The focus tightens on the deep, unmoving shadows beneath a stand of ancient, twisted trees.

Five silhouettes stand perfectly still. They are MELANIE'S ELITES.

EREBUS, the leader, is tall and sharp, like a shadow given the form of a blade. Next to him is NYX, feminine and fluid, darkness shaped into a lethal curve. The other three…MORUS (a bulky, imposing shape), STYX (slender and precise), and KEK (a smaller, darting form)—stand at attention.

EREBUS
(His voice is the sound of a grave closing)
Now. While they are sated, while their guards are down, while they journey home alone and weary. That is when we strike. They will not know what embraced them.

NYX
(Her voice a velvet whisper)
Darling, they're already leaving. Should we not follow?

EREBUS
What do you think we've been doing all evening, my night-bloom? Watching. Cataloging. Morus. Styx. Kek. Your targets are assigned. Follow. Infiltrate. Report.

MORUS/STYX/KEK
(In unison, voices like scraping stone)
Yes, Commander.

The three shifts. Their solid forms liquefy into pools of pure, sentient shadow that slither across the ground, moving faster than the eye can follow, each heading in a different direction into the night.

Erebus turns to Nyx, the sharp angles of his silhouette softening slightly.

EREBUS
What thoughts linger in the darkness of your mind, my dear?

NYX
I was merely thinking of our own day. When we return triumphant. Madam Melanie promised to oversee the ceremony herself. Can you imagine? A wedding in the heart of the Absolute Dark. It will be… perfect.

EREBUS
It will be wherever you are. But first, we ensure the board is cleared. While the Dark Lord is distracted playing patriarch in his little pocket universe, we set the stage. No matter the locale, I will be glad to bind myself to you for eternity.

NYX
(A dark, tender smile in her voice)
Then let us not keep our future waiting. We have roles to play.

They nod to each other and dissolve into two more streaks of living shadow, vanishing from the grove.

(The camera is yanked upward, violently, into the sky. Not of this world. It punches through a sudden, sickly RIFT in reality.)

INT. MELANIE'S OBSERVATORY - CONTINUOUS

We are in a sterile, geometric room. MELANIE stands before a wall that is not a wall, but a window into countless realities. She turns, sensing the intrusion. Her featureless face looks directly at the camera.

MELANIE
Oh. Hello again, you little sneaking, peeping things. Back so soon? I can’t flick you off your screens, more’s the pity. That would be… inelegant.

She walks closer, her form seeming to drink the light from the very image.

MELANIE
I bet you’re wondering. ‘Why?’ Why the war with the Dark Lord? Why the games? It’s all there. In the details. The creator…your creator, of this little story…he’s left crumbs. Easter eggs, I believe they’re called. If you know where to look in the books… you might find the answers are already written. Hidden in plain sight. The true names. The original sins. The first betrayal.

She leans in, her voice dropping to a conspiratorial whisper.

MELANIE
Go on. Read between the lines. It's worth the wait. Now… goodbye. The show down there is getting to the good part.

With a wave of her hand, she slams the rift shut. The force of it causes the camera's perspective to shudder and flicker with static. Her final words echo: "See you all very soon."

(MAIN TITLE SEQUENCE)

SCENE 1: THE HUNT BEGINS

The static clears. We are following the elite shadows.

EREBUS'S SHADOW flows like black oil, following a familiar, trudging figure: DARRENCE, walking alone down a moonlit forest path back toward Anjalin's treehouse, lost in thought.

MORUS'S SHADOW stalks a heavier, grim presence: EDENBER, the Ogre, moving with a ground-shaking stride, muttering to himself.

STYX'S SHADOW is more delicate, seeking not a person, but a scent…a specific, fading spark of magical essence. It slithers off the path, into a copse of trees where a small, makeshift cairn of stones rests.

KEK'S SHADOW darts like a nervous spider, heading straight for the glowing lights of Anjalin's treehouse in the distance.

NYX'S SHADOW flows beside Erebus's, a partner in the hunt.

SCENE 2: A VARIANT HELL

(The perspective is suddenly PULLED, not by choice, as if grabbed by a hook.)

We are no longer on the forest path. We are somewhere hot, reeking of sulfur and sorrow. This is a HELL, but it's… off. The colors are too bright, the torments slightly theatrical. A variant, a lesser copy.

EXT. VARIANT HELL - LAVA FIELDS

THE DARK LORD walks calmly down a path of cooling, malting lava. He is in his full, terrifying regalia…the flowing black robes, the crown of smoke. To his sides pad two demonic beasts…creatures of molten rock and wicked intelligence. Above, winged figures with beautiful, angelic faces and twisted, barbed tails watch him pass with a mixture of fear and reverence.

He reaches out, casually scratching the beasts behind their stone ears.

DARK LORD
Satan treated you well, I see. And Lucifer kept your wings polished. Good. Now, go. Announce me. I've come for a chat.

The beasts lope away. The demonic angels take flight. The Dark Lord then turns, and it feels like he looks directly into the lens. He reaches out a hand, and the camera's perspective is pulled to him, helpless.

DARK LORD
A tourist in a knock-off Inferno. Charming, isn't it? This is but a pale reflection of the Prime Hell I call… a former home. You have questions. So many. But the answers have been there. In every choice I've made, every face I've worn, every sin I've collected. As clear as the fear in a mortal's eyes. Now, come. The management awaits.

He releases us, but we are compelled to follow as he floats effortlessly up a spiraling path toward a grand, garish palace of black glass and brass.

At the entrance, two thrones sit. On one, LUCIFER…a handsome, white-haired man in an immaculate white suit and fur coat, looking bored. On the other, a massive, bestial form wreathed in flame…SATAN, who grunts in acknowledgment.

The Dark Lord waves a dismissive hand at the camera.

DARK LORD
This conversation is not for the audience. Come back when the adults are done speaking.

A wave of dark energy shoves the camera's perspective away, sending it tumbling back through dimensions.

SCENE 3: PREY IN THE FOREST

We landed back on the hill overlooking Anjalin's treehouse. The five elite shadows have coalesced back into their forms, watching the scene below like wolves.

Through a window, we see DARRENCE, ANJALIN, EDENBER, and JALEY in the living room. The mood is somber. Anjalin pours a dark, fortified wine.

ANJALIN
Darrence. Edenber. Take Gnomeblely's remains to the family plot in the rear garden. It's time.

EDENBER

(Grunts)
Come on, Stick. Let's do the dirty work.

DARRENCE
Why me? Why us?

EDENBER
Look at you. Scared of a little night air and a dead gnome. Pathetic.

DARRENCE
(Jaw tight)
I'm not scared. Let's just go.

They leave. Anjalin sighs, sinking into the couch.

ANJALIN
He's always so… tense.

JALEY
(Nervously)
Do you…have any entertainment? A viewing crystal? Something to distract?

ANJALIN
Help yourself. I need to think.

As Jaley starts browsing a shelf of glowing crystals, we follow the two men outside.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - GARDEN PATH - NIGHT

Darrence and Edenber lift a small, beautifully crafted metal coffin. They carry it down a winding path into a wild, overgrown garden that serves as a private cemetery. The moonlight is weak.

SNAP.

A twig breaks in the dark beyond the hedge. Darrence jumps, nearly dropping his end.

EDENBER
(Scoffs)
Hear that? The mighty warrior, frightened by a squirrel. Or his own shadow.

DARRENCE
Shut up. Let's just finish this.

They reach a small, neat plot. Darrence takes a shovel and begins digging. Edenber stands watch, his massive head tilted back, looking at the stars. He whispers, so low only we can hear.

EDENBER
(Whispering)
I miss the deep stone, Father. I hope I make you proud. That I can return soon… and be your chief.

DARRENCE
(Wiping sweat)
It's deep enough. Help me lower him.

They place the coffin in the hole. As they turn to grab the shovels to fill it, a shadow detaches from a nearby statue and flows soundlessly into the open grave.

When they turn back, shovels in hand, the coffin lid is slightly ajar. And it's empty.

DARRENCE
What…?

EDENBER
He's gone! The little one's gone!

A cold laugh echoes. STYX, now wearing Gnomeblely's form like an ill-fitting suit, stands behind them. The gnome's eyes are pools of blackness.

STYX (in Gnomeblely's voice)
No need for a burial. The lease on this flesh is… transferred.

Darrence lets out a yell of terror, drops his shovel, and sprints back toward the house.

EDENBER
Coward! Face it!

But as Darrence disappears into the dark, MORUS erupts from the shadow at Edenber's own feet.

MORUS
(The voice of grinding boulders)
Forget him. Let's see what the Stone-Hide Tribe is made of, Ogre.

Edenber roars and charges. It's a brutal, close-quarters brawl. Edenber swings massive fists, but Morus is a fluid shadow, absorbing blows and striking back with precise, debilitating force…an elbow to the shoulder nerve cluster, a kick to the solar plexus.

MORUS
You are strong. But strength is a blunt instrument. I am a scalpel.

A final, spinning kick connects with Edenber's temple. The ogre stumbles, dazed. As he falls, Morus's form dissolves into a cloud of darkness that pours into Edenber's mouth, nose, and ears.

Edenber's body convulses, then goes still. After a moment, he stands. He flexes his hands, a cruel, unfamiliar smile on the ogre's face.

MORUS (in Edenber's voice)
Oh, this will do nicely. They won't know what hit them.

SCENE 4: THE SHADOW REALM

We follow DARRENCE, sprinting in blind panic through the woods. He doesn't see the long, liquid shadow that keeps pace with him, flowing from tree to tree.

Suddenly, the shadow surges ahead, solidifying into EREBUS, blocking the path.

EREBUS
Run. Hide. Turn invisible. Teleport. Try. It amuses me.

Darrence gasps, turns invisible, and attempts to teleport. His form flickers… but goes nowhere. He's trapped. Erebus smiles.

EREBUS
You're already in my domain.

The forest around them melts. The trees become wavering silhouettes, the ground turns to a surface of liquid, ink-black glass. They are in the SHADOW REALM. Erebus splits…one, two, five, ten copies of himself appear in a circle around the terrified Darrence.

EREBUS (all copies)
Let's dance.

Darrence teleports in a panic…crack…behind one copy, who backhands him. Crack…to the left, a kick sends him sprawling. He's fast, but they are everywhere, predicting his every move. It's a violent, one-sided ballet. Fists and feet pummel him from all sides. He's thrown, slammed, stomped.

Finally, he lies broken on the black glass, barely conscious. The copies converge into the single form of Erebus, who kneels beside him.

EREBUS
A valiant, futile effort. Now… rest. I'll take it from here.

Erebus places a hand on Darrence's chest. His form turns to black smoke and pours into Darrence's body. Darrence's eyes fly open…they are now solid, dark orbs. He (Erebus) stands, brushes off Darrence's clothes, and steps out of the Shadow Realm, back into the normal woods, where Morus (in Edenber's body) and Styx (in Gnomeblely's body) wait.

EREBUS (in Darrence's voice)
Phase one is complete. Now we wait for the final pieces. Then the real performance begins.

SCENE 5: INFILTRATION

INT. ANJALIN'S TREEHOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Anjalin stares into the fire. Jaley is rummaging in the pantry.

JALEY
(O.S.)
Do you have any sweet biscuits? Or perhaps some dried fruits?

ANJALIN
(Distracted)
Bottom shelf, left side. And bring more wine.

JALEY
(O.S.)
Yes, of course… It's just… taking them rather long, isn't it?

ANJALIN
They're probably arguing over the placement of the headstone. They'll be back.

Jaley pulls a tin of cookies from the shelf. As she does, the shadow cast by the tin on the wall stretches. It peels away, materializing into KEK, who stands directly behind her.

Jaley feels the chill. She turns slowly, a scream building in her throat.

KEK
(A finger to where lips would be)
Shhh. No noise. It's more fun that way.

With a wave of Kek's hand, the pantry door seals shut with a layer of solidified darkness. Jaley, trembling, pulls a small, ceremonial knife from her boot. In her fear, she fumbles and nicks her own palm. She holds the bloody knife out.

KEK
(Giggles, a sound like rattling pebbles)
Oh! A little knife! And you've blessed it with your own luck! How adorable.

Kek moves…a blur. She disarms Jaley in a millisecond, reverses the blade, and plunges it into Jaley's thigh. Jaley cries out, collapsing. Kek kneels on her chest.

KEK
Look at you. All that potential, wrapped in a curse of misfortune. It's almost poetic.

From Jaley's pocket, a two-headed garden snake (her familiar) slithers out and wraps around Kek's neck, constricting.

KEK
(Gurgling, amused)
Really? Your little friend thinks it can strangle shadow-stuff? How quaint.

She peels the snake off and throws it aside. It hits the wall and lies still.

JALEY
(Gasping)
Please…

KEK
Please what? I'm not going to kill you, silly elf. I'm going to… cohabitate. You get to watch. We can even chat on my off-hours. You look like you need a friend who appreciates bad luck.

Kek's form dissolves into a cold vapor that forces itself into Jaley's mouth and nose. Jaley's body arches, then goes limp. A moment later, her eyes open. They are her own, but swimming with trapped terror. She (Kek) stands, brushes off her clothes, and picks up the wine and cookies.

KEK (in Jaley's voice, to the trapped consciousness within)
Now, let's go be social. And remember… one wrong move, and I make you bite your own tongue off.

She unseals the door and walks back to the living room.

KEK/JALEY
Here we are! The biscuits are a bit stale, but the wine looks strong.

Anjalin takes a glass, sniffs it. She takes a cookie, crumbles it in her fingers. Her eyes narrow.

ANJALIN
Something is wrong. This wine… it smells of cold soil. This cookie tastes of ash.

KEK/JALEY
(Smiling innocently)
Does it? How strange.

The fire in the hearth flickers violently. From within the flames, NYX steps out, as if walking through a curtain. The fire does not burn her.

NYX
It's because you're the clever one, darling. Touched by the Devil's own ambition. He gave you a taste of true power, didn't he? Greed is such a potent enhancer. So, what will it be? A fight? Or a graceful surrender?

Anjalin is already moving. She raises her hands. The very treehouse responds…flames from every candle, every hearth, and the latent blood within the living wood itself, rip free and coalesce around her, forming searing, crimson chains that shoot toward Nyx and Kek.

Nyx doesn't dodge. The chains pass through her as if she's a mirage. She walks forward, unfazed.

NYX
Impressive. Raw power. But I've danced with concepts older than your gods.

Nyx is suddenly in front of Anjalin. A single, piston-fast punch connects with Anjalin's jaw, snapping her head back. Anjalin stumbles but doesn't fall. She roars, her fist engulfed in black-tinged fire (the Dark Lord's gift), and swings.

Nyx catches the fiery fist in her hand. The flames sputter and die against her palm.

NYX
No, dearie. Not strong enough. Not yet.

Anjalin's own shadow on the floor comes alive, wrapping around her legs, her arms, holding her fast. Nyx walks over calmly, places a hand on Anjalin's forehead.

NYX
But you will be. Such a magnificent vessel. All that rage, that grief, that hunger…it will do nicely.

Nyx's form blurs into a stream of absolute darkness that pours into Anjalin's eyes, ears, and mouth. Anjalin's body trembles, a scream trapped in her throat, then goes rigid.

A moment passes. Anjalin's eyes open. They are pools of serene, ancient darkness. She (Nyx) flexes her fingers, and black fire wreathes them, more controlled and deadly than ever before.

NYX (in Anjalin's voice)
Oh… this power is divine. The synergy… perfect.

She walks to the door and opens it. Erebus (in Darrence), Morus (in Edenber), and Styx (in Gnomeblely) are waiting outside. Nyx (in Anjalin) steps out and kisses Erebus (in Darrence).

NYX/ANJALIN
The cast is assembled. The stage is set. Now… let's go knock over some dominoes.

They turn as one, looking out from the hill not at the treehouse, but at the distant, glowing spires of the Diamond Kingdom and the Celestial City beyond. A unified, chilling purpose in their stolen eyes.

FINAL SHOT: The five possessed heroes, standing together in the night, their backs to us. The camera holds on them, a perfect, terrifying tableau.

Then, the perspective is WRENCHED AWAY.

INT. DARK LORD'S POCKET DIMENSION - ABYSSAL OFFICE

We are in a luxurious, dark-paneled study within the Dark Lord's personal realm. He is in his refined, humanoid form, sipping a drink. Seated across from him in a high-backed chair is RUMMELSTILTSKIN…a being of sharp angles and older magic, spinning a thread of pure gold from thin air.

Rummelstiltskin's head cocks, as if hearing a distant sound. He smiles, needle-like teeth glinting.

RUMMELSTILTSKIN
Oh dear. It seems the mice have taken the cheese. And they're wearing the faces of the household cats.

THE DARK LORD
(Sipping his drink, unperturbed)
They have. Right on schedule.

He looks up, directly at the camera that has just been pulled into his office. His expression is one of mild annoyance.

DARK LORD
This conversation is not for the gallery. Not yet. The reveal must be earned.

He flicks his wrist.

A slice of pure void cuts across the screen.

BLACK.

Silence.

Then, from the darkness, a faint, echoing giggle…Kek's laugh, mingled with Jaley's trapped sob.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE 2.

Episode 3 Death Comes To Those Who Aren't Watching

The camera turns on and we are in the 9906's office at the top of the entire tech civilization and we see 9906 and Stan sitting down looking out into the world while sipping their tea and 9906 says what do you think he has planned for this world? Stan says I don't know but do you remember anything before we came to this planet other than what little memories we have? 9906 says no I can't I just remember so journeys we went off with him but nothing else or when and where we were created.

Stan says yeah it is strange but something must have happened that we don't know or need to know. 9906 says yes our father does work in mysterious, corrupt, dark, and evil ways. Stan says that is what it means to be the Dark Lord and rule over the darkness.